

DRAGON +

PREVIEW:

Deeper Inside
the Tomb of
Annihilation!!

BETRAYAL AT BALDUR'S GATE

+
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DRAGON+ 15

Welcome to Issue 15

A warm welcome from Avalon Hill's Shelly Mazzanoble... before she betrays us all.

There's long been a fine history of games appearing in *Dragon Magazine* (as discussed in our D&D Classics column in this issue), and WizKids is also set to release the next board game in the D&D Adventure System, *Tomb of Annihilation*. Plus, Bkom will be publishing its own digital version of the *Tomb of Annihilation* board game (announced this issue!) under the title, *Tales from Candlekeep*.

So for this issue of *Dragon+*, we wanted to focus on board games.

Of course, there also happened to be another little game announced at our Stream of Annihilation event. And so, with *Betrayal at Baldur's Gate* due out this October and our spotlight being on board games, we asked Avalon Hill's Shelly Mazzanoble to pen this issue's welcome...

A message of betrayal

When I took over brand management for Avalon Hill two years ago (coming from Dungeons & Dragons) I had no idea how exciting things were going to get. Sure, I knew we were in the midst of a "board game renaissance." I had heard all about millennials eschewing their phones in favor of face-to-face social interactions. I saw a ca-zillion dollars raised on Kickstarter so indie designers could create the next great gaming masterpiece.

It was a good time to be working in board games, and yet I couldn't help think how much D&D was going to miss me. My second thought was, "I'M GOING TO MAKE ALL THE BETRAYAL GAMES!" That was quickly followed by the thought, "Gee, I'm

really going to miss working with those kooky D&D kids. Maybe one day we'll be together again.”

Sigh...

Turns out betrayal can happen anywhere. Like in the hallway, as Mike Mearls ran by saying something like, “D&D! Betrayal! Fun!”

Huh. Maybe those kooky D&D kids were on to something.

All I know is when we started talking in earnest about this fantastical, chocolate-in-the-peanut butter mash-up between Avalon Hill and D&D, I could hardly contain myself. I even saved the notes from our first meeting:

“So it’s like *Betrayal at House on the Hill* but with D&D flavor.”

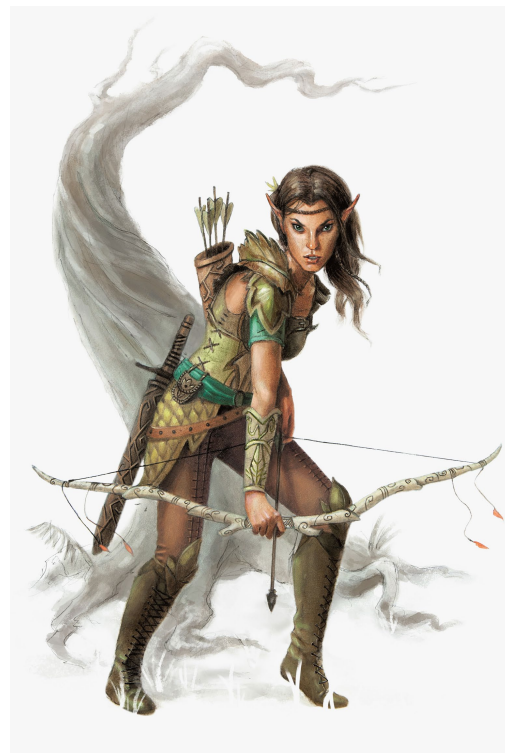
“But it’s D&D! I can’t stab my party in the back!”

“You will in Baldur’s Gate!”

“DONE!”

And we were off!

Much like a well-balanced D&D party, everyone on the team played a very important role in helping this game cross the finish line. Mike designed the cards on a long flight to Korea. Matt Sernett dipped into his lore *bag of holding* (a.k.a “his brain”) ensuring the Elfsong Tavern was illuminated with “blue drift globes the size of grapefruits”. Scott Okumura, who has designed every single *Betrayal* tile since the beginning of time, once again dazzled with his elaborately detailed illustrations. Richard Whitters drew all of the items, monsters, tokens, and NPCs. (Does she look familiar?



(Select to view)

She should.)

Adam Lee added more flavor than a Spanish paella chef. The dream team of Shauna Narciso and Emi Tanji made every component a visual delight. Chris Dupuis didn't see his family for three months during development. Heather Fleming wrangled the cats (tabaxi?) to keep on schedule. Haunt writers from across the company jumped at the chance to create awesome (and sometimes horrifying) stories, while hundreds of playtesters provided thoughtful, enthusiastic feedback.

And most importantly there was me—rocking back and forth in my ergonomically correct desk chair, strategically ordering pastries to keep morale up, and *certainly not eluding to this super-secret, exciting project* on the Dragon Talk podcast. My role was very important.

And then there was Bhaal. I guess his role is important too. (Depending on which cards you draw, his role might be *very* important.) Please make sure to appreciate that gorgeous box art by Scott M. Fischer; before this, Bhaal had never been depicted in human form so everyone had their own ideas as to what he might look like. Mike thought he conjured images of Clancy Brown, I imagined Charlie Hunnam ("*Sons of Anarchy*" Charlie, not "*King Arthur* Charlie".) And Adam Lee thought it would be cool if Bhaal's face morphed into that of his victims' the exact moment before he kills them.

"So the last thing you see is your own face as you're being murdered!"

And then he trotted off to yoga class.

Okay, Adam.

But Shauna had her own vision and overruled us all. Her direction for Scott was as follows:

"Bhaal should appear as a handsome man with raw, physical presence. His every move suggests strength and power. He has the broad shoulders and heavy muscles of someone who has lived a life of physical labor or martial practice. He always carries a red

handkerchief somewhere on his person. Personality-wise, Bhaal is a vicious bully who genuinely enjoys killing people in gruesome, terrible ways. Whatever he looks like, we shouldn't recognize him as an actor or an ad for a Cialis commercial."

We settled on a combination of Tom Hardy, Gerald Butler, Daniel Craig, and Greg Tito's hair. (Honestly I didn't notice the hair until months later, but the resemblance is uncanny.)



(Select to view)

The end result is something we're all incredibly proud of, and we hope you enjoy your visit to Baldur's Gate. Remember, never split the party—unless someone is the traitor. Then it's game on.

Love you!

Shelly Mazzanoble

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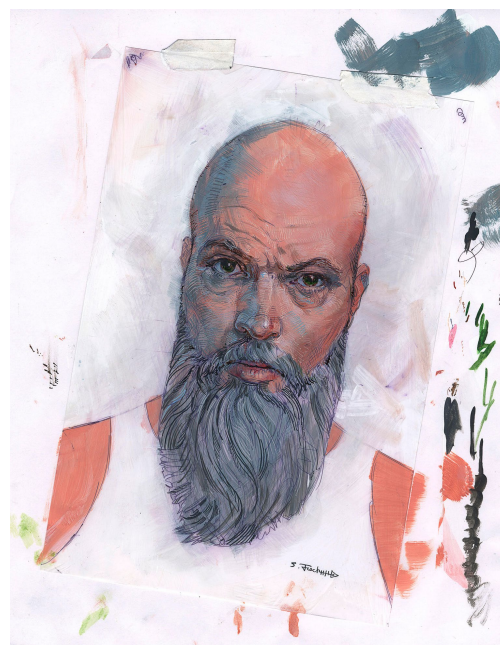
Imagining the Ampersand

Meet Scott M. Fischer, the multi-talented plate-spinner responsible for this issue's cover.

Massachusetts-based Scott M Fischer has joined us in a grumble about the weather, although he thinks we might have the edge here in the UK. “I remember being in London one time for *Magic: The Gathering*, and it was the first time I’d seen strollers with plastic sheeting on them to protect the kids inside,” he tells *Dragon+*.

One thing the talented illustrator and children’s book author is not moaning about is his chosen career path. If the school kid he was could only see him now, he’d be mighty proud. “I loved game art. That was always the thing with me. I played D&D when I

was a kid and in fourth grade I wrote a paper saying I wanted to do the art for Dungeons & Dragons. When I was in the fourth grade! And I've gotten to do that.



Scott M. Fischer (select to view)

“They first brought me in to work on D&D during third edition. I remember one of my early assignments was to do the beholder for the *Monster Manual*. I couldn't believe it. Having written that paper in fourth grade, it was like a full-circle moment for me.”

[Tell us about the creation of the box art for Betrayal at Baldur's Gate, which we've transformed into the cover for this issue of *Dragon+*?](#) It's always a really interesting process with me. I like to think that people hire me these days to bring my own vision to it. While that might sound normal, it's not always the case with illustration. Often, especially if you're working on something like a game, you are a cog in the machine. There are a certain amount of pieces that need to be fulfilled, within certain stylistic constraints. It's a little less about personal interpretation and artistic flair than it is about just getting the job done.

My hope, at this point, is that when I'm being hired, they're thinking, 'Let Scott do his thing.' Those are the best jobs to do, as long as my work fulfils the mission. With this cover, they trusted me to put my own swing on it—my own mix of graphic design choices and figurative rendering, with lots of atmosphere. It was a wonderful, painless process.

[What was the initial brief?](#)

They knew they wanted this main character on the cover, and they sent me some pretty good art direction. In the beginning, they almost

wanted it to have a Jack the Ripper vibe, where the main figure is pretty confrontational but spooky. He's strong, but with some atmosphere and flavor of the city behind him. Not necessarily a beautiful city, a little more of a grungy and dirty feel to it. They showed me an example of a cover that had come from one of the earlier board games, and those were all things I could work with.



(select to view)



Early drafts of the board game box cover (select to view)

That's an interesting mix of things to get your teeth into...

The one requirement was that I had to have Bhaal's face in the moon, that glowing orb behind him. I suppose I'm happiest when I can have three to four elements to arrange in a composition, without it becoming overly complicated. Where an assignment gets difficult is when they're like: "We need an army of people and these three here need to have a sword, and this one should have a mace, this one has a cannon..." On and on, like a laundry list of items that are a lot to try and cram onto a cover. I am all about chasing icons and making a cover as strong and as iconic as I can, and as clear to read as possible. That probably comes from years of working on *Magic: The Gathering* cards, where they reduce my art to one inch. [Laughs] You've got to learn how to make that clear to read!



An example of Scott's art for Magic: The Gathering (select to view)

It's funny, because for me, at some point, those constraints became almost too much. So I wound up doing a much larger painting, usually vertical in format, and I would indicate within that where I wanted them to crop my image for a *Magic* card. My thought process was that anything outside of that box is my playground. Suddenly, because I was taking ownership of those areas of the painting, it was more than a job and became a personal quest to get my own voice into those extra areas. In a way that developed my voice further, and that certainly came into play on this cover, because a lot of the things I would experiment with on the extra areas of those *Magic* cards are similar things I would do these days on a full image.

When did you first encounter D&D?

I probably started playing D&D in 1980, or the early '80s, so pretty early on. All the way through high school I would play it here and there, but then I didn't play the game at all for decades. My daughter is now 14-years-old and one day she came to me and said, "Dad, did you do D&D?" And I told her I'd worked on that game a lot. She said, "My friends are talking about forming a campaign." I'm like, "No way!" So it's great, because my daughter is into it now and we get a little group of her friends together and I'm the Dungeon Master.

We're starting out with fifth edition. We've already played four or five times, rolling the dice, and it's certainly bringing it all back for me.

Besides that beholder for the third edition *Monster Manual*, what other art would your fourth grade self be proud of?

Aside from *Magic: The Gathering*, I did D&D work all the way up to the latest version. Fifth edition includes three or four pieces of mine. I also did conceptual design work for a *Tron* video game Disney was producing, and that was a blast. And I do tons of novel covers, including the *Wheel of Time* series, which is very big. I got to do one of the repackage covers for that for Tor.com, which was fabulous.



The children's book *Jump!* (select to view)

I cross a lot of industries, and, stylistically, I've worked in a lot of areas. I've even done a few children's books. I was fortunate enough to get one of my books, *Jump!*, into boxes of Cheerios, so they printed three million copies of that book! I don't think that crowd, which knows me for my children's books, knows about the D&D side of my work, because in some cases it's that divorced. So I've worked with every age group and every genre I can think of. And now I'm breaking into gallery work as well.

It must be nice to have that varied workload, because some people get pigeonholed and find it hard to break out of that?

It's a great point and one that I bring up when I teach workshops.

That illustration masterclass is fabulous because we've got

Donato Giancola, Boris Vallejo, Dan dos Santos, and Rebecca Guay. All of us get together for one week in the summer and teach —although there’s also an online version of this called **SmArt School**.

One thing I tell the students is, in many respects I’m glad that I never got known for one thing really early in my twenties, and got stuck doing that for the rest of my career. It seemed to me that every time I started to get a little bit of attention for something I was doing in an industry, I would jump to another industry.

My friend Rick Berry explained it to me once. He said a career is like having a foot on a train. That train is picking up speed, and as you get better and better you get more and more recognition, until you’re flying down that track. Whenever you can, put a toe on another train on a different track. So when the first train crashes into a wall, you can hop over to the second train and continue on your journey. So that’s exactly what I’ve done. You run the risk of being the jack of all trades and the king of none if you work this way, I suppose. But I’d rather be super-competent and known for many, many things.

[You actually teach alongside Boris Vallejo?](#)

When I met him for the first time, I couldn’t believe I was meeting Boris Vallejo! He was with an art director I was working with, and I put my work up in front of them, and someone asked Boris what he thought of my painting. Boris said, “It looks fantastic, I think it’s done.” So I turned to the art director and said, “Well, if Boris Vallejo thinks it’s done…” I got the Boris stamp of approval.



A cover for the Angel Season Eleven comic-book series (select to view)

How has the industry changed since you first began illustrating?

In addition to being in all these different genres, social media has completely changed the game as far as recognition and getting your artwork out there goes. I consider myself a professional plate spinner. All these different things I do are a plate, and every once in a while I have to run back and spin the plate to keep it going, before it falls off the stick. But working in all these diverse areas was probably one of the smartest decisions I ever made, because now on Instagram I'm fortunate enough to have 120,000 followers.

All of a sudden, where everything I used to do was directly tied to a publisher or a game company, I have a direct line to lovers of art. That's been a total game changer for me. I did a few limited edition prints and did nothing more than advertise them on Instagram, and there's no publisher to go through, it's direct to market. Also, to have that kind of instant feedback from whoever's out there is amazing.

One of the best things about the industry is that fan base, which is why no matter where I go career-wise, I'd like to keep a toe in gaming. Doing this *Betrayal at Baldur's Gate* box art is me going back and spinning that plate a little bit, being able to show that I'm still here and I still love this stuff, and I still super-appreciate the people who play these games.

To see more of Scott M. Fischer's work, [visit his official website](#).



The board game box art that became our Dragon+ cover (select to view)

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Tomb of Annihilation: Preview

We head deep into the jungles of Chult to provide an exclusive preview of Tomb of Annihilation.

An Overview

Death lurks just around the corner! Set to release September 19, *Tomb of Annihilation* involves the threat of extra-planar evil trapping the souls of the dead with a death curse. Manifesting as a terrible plague, this curse is a slow, withering rot that takes hold of any soul who has been restored by divine magic. Adventurers and wealthy patrons (namely, those most likely to have been resurrected) have scrambled into action, using every means at their disposal to find out the cause of their fatal affliction.

As revealed during our [Stream of Annihilation](#) event, vital clues about the disease have indicated the source of the curse is a necromantic device called the Soulmonger. It was further discovered

that the Soulmonger lies hidden deep within the unexplored jungles of Chult, buried under a long-forgotten city called Omu.

Last issue we explored much of the concepting and underlying design of the campaign. This issue, with *Tomb of Annihilation* set to release, we wanted to offer a fuller set of excerpts accompanied by text from the finished book itself!

Exploring the Jungles of Chult



(Select to view)

As for the nature of the jungle setting that adventurers will soon face? “With the exception of a few coastal settlements, Chult is untamed tropical wilderness: dense jungles and snaky rivers ringed by mountains, volcanoes, and sheer escarpments. Walls of mountains to the west, south, and east shield the interior from the sea and from the view of sailors. The rivers are so sluggish that it can be difficult determining which direction is upstream and which is down. The rivers pick up speed only where they thunder down through steep-sided gorges.”

Arriving in Chult, most adventurers will begin in Port Nyanzaru... almost by default. There are no other cities in Chult, unless one counts those in ruin or overrun by monstrous creatures. As introduced

in chapter one: “Port Nyanzaru is a bastion of civilization and commerce in a savage land. The amount of business that unfolds here and the cash that moves through its counting houses would make any merchant of Baldur’s Gate or Waterdeep jealous. It’s also a colorful, musical, aroma-filled, vibrant city in its own right. Other than trade, the biggest attractions are the weekly dinosaur races through the streets. Locals and visitors alike wager princely sums on the races’ outcomes. The city also boasts grand bazaars, glorious mansions and temples, circuses, and gladiatorial contests.”

“The true stars of the dinosaur races are the dinosaurs themselves. They are Ubtao’s children, after all,” says Chris Perkins. “Chultans add to the spectacle of the races by painting colorful racing stripes and other designs on the beasts. They also give them colorful names, such as Mountain Thunder and Banana Candy. Navigating the streets of Port Nyanzaru on the back of a dinosaur can be tricky, and spectators prefer to watch from the tops of walls, balconies, and roofs. It’s been a while since anyone was seriously hurt watching or participating in a dinosaur race, except from eating bad dates.

“Adventurers who want to do more than bet on a race’s outcome can join a racing team and become dinosaur riders themselves. *Tomb of Annihilation* includes rules not only for wagering on the dinosaur races, but also for participating in them.”

It’s at Port Nyanzaru that players will have the opportunity to question locals to learn the latest rumors, gather needed supplies, and hire a guide (a critical role to aid those keen on exploring the jungle). Once outside Port Nyanzaru, the dangers of Chult are immediately felt. “The jungle teems with ferocious reptiles and murderous undead, pirates prowl the surrounding sea, and the mouth of the bay is home to a greedy dragon turtle.” Last issue, we concluded our initial look at *Tomb of Annihilation* with R&D’s



(Select to view)

Adam Lee previewing one of Chult’s jungle denizens: the grungs of Dungrunglung. More fully described in chapter two, the grungs toil under their despotic king, Groak, who is obsessed with summoning the goddess Nangnang. “To please their king, the grungs have erected a sixty-foot-tall mud shrine, where Groak plans to woo the goddess and where she, in turn, can bless him with generations of god-touched, royal Groaklings.”

These grungs, it seems, are in desperate need of this goddess’s divine favor. Although traditionally scheming, greedy, and generally unpleasant to deal with by nature, “these grungs of Dungrunglung are experiencing desperate times. Ghouls and zombies threaten their existence, and grung poison is ineffective against the undead. Consequently, the grungs are strongly incentivized to use outsiders to solve their undead problem instead of making slaves or meals out of them.”

For DMs planning to run this particular encounter in the jungle, we’ve provided the following resources. In addition, you can watch the grungs play out in action, during this season of **Force Grey: Lost City of Omu** on D&D’s twitch channel (look for Dungrunglung to appear in episode 9).

- PDF: [Dungrunglung](#) (pgs 49-51)
 - Maps: [Player's Map of Chult](#); [Dungrunglung](#)
-

Omu, the Forbidden City



(Select to view)

By this point, it's perhaps not too much of a spoiler to say that once in the jungle, adventurers will eventually look to find their way to Omu. The lost city is notoriously hard to find. Those who make the attempt must contend with miles of trackless jungle inhabited by natural predators, savage goblins, elemental spirits, the grungs, and the remnants of an undead army.

As for the history of this lost city, Omu is fully chronicled in chapter three: "Once a jewel in Chult's crown, built over rich mineral veins, Omu garnered wealth in abundance. Yet The Omuans' greed and hubris angered the god Ubtao, causing him to turn his back on the city. Omu's clerics lost their spells, and the city fell to sickness and disease. In time, maps showing Omu's location were destroyed, and its coins were melted down and reminted—thus fallen from grace, Omu became known as the Forbidden City."

It's here that adventurers will take their next steps in their search for the Soulmonger. As the city's legend continues, with the god Ubtao

gone from Omu, “primal spirits arose from the rainforest to bewitch the few remaining Omuans. They disguised themselves as jungle creatures and promised great power in return for devotion. Desperate for redemption, the Omuans tore down their temple to Ubtao and raised shrines to these nine trickster gods.”

Unfortunately, these trickster gods were divisive and cruel. “Too weak to grant miracles to every follower, they concocted elaborate trials to winnow the clergy. On holy days, the mettle of aspirant priests was tested in their nine shrines, with deadly consequences for failure... Omu’s glorious past was lost, but its people endured. Such mercy did not last long.”

“The shrines of the trickster gods aren’t safe for the common rabble. Kubazan, the most adventurous of the trickster gods, liked to break into the shrines and test their defenses. If a shrine failed to challenge him, he would mock its architects mercilessly,” says Perkins.

“The shrine of Shagambi is especially challenging. To conquer it, adventurers must hurl themselves into a gladiatorial pit and do battle with invincible clay warriors. Obo’laka’s shrine is more of a puzzle, requiring adventurers to pay close attention to clues hidden in plain sight. Nangnang’s shrine is a reflection of her greed, and they say only the most selfish adventurer can hope to reach its innermost chamber.”

Adventurers who come upon Omu now find only a dead city enclosed by sheer cliffs: “Ruined buildings and stone boulevards rise like ghosts from the floor of the misty basin. Colorful birds glide overhead. A waterfall pours into the basin, creating a swollen river that floods much of the city before draining into a deep rift filled with molten lava. A ruined palace lies a few hundred feet from the edge of the steaming abyss.”

- Maps: [Players Map of Omu](#)
- PDF: [Story Guide: Batari](#)

Acerak’s Tomb of the Nine Gods



(Select to view)

What led to Omu’s demise? Eventually, the bloody trials of its trickster gods drew the attention of a famed archlich. “Acererak, who is fond of deathtraps, marveled at the trials concocted by the Omuans. They inspired him to create his own dungeon below the city.”

As explained in chapter five: “Acererak entered Omu and slew all nine trickster gods. He then enslaved the Omuans and forced them to carve out a tomb for their defeated gods.” And so it’s here in Omu that Acererak built his Tomb of the Nine Gods—not only to house the remains of Omu’s trickster gods, but also to slay interlopers. “When the tomb was complete, Acererak murdered the Omuans and sealed them in the tomb with their false gods... The jungle reclaimed Omu, and it fell into ruin.”

To enter the Tomb of the Nine Gods, adventurers must tread cautiously, contend with the dwellers of the ruined city, and learn all they can about the nine trickster gods of Omu and their ancient rivalries. Yet as players explore Omu looking for an entrance to Acererak’s dungeon, they must also contend with Omu’s guardian—Ras Nsi, the evil warlord who wormed his way into the yuan-ti’s favor, and underwent a ritual to transform into a malison. Before long, he became their ruler.

“Ras Nsi was one of the barae—a sworn defender of the city of Mezro,” reveals Perkins. “He broke his oath to the city and tried to conquer it with an undead army. Luckily, he was vanquished. Driven

into exile, Ras Nsi retreated to the darkest reaches of Chult. He lost the blessing of Ubtao, and with that went his immortality. In time, he also lost control of his undead army, though remnants of that army wander the jungles of Chult to this day.”

“Having died once and come back from the dead, Ras Nsi is subject to Acererak’s death curse. Time is running out for the disgraced warlord, and he knows it. Before he leaves the world, he wants to unleash Dendar the Night Serpent upon it. This ancient evil lies trapped in the underworld, and Ras Nsi’s apocalyptic yuan-ti cult is searching for the means to set her free. Legends speak of a Black Opal Crown with the power to unlock the gates to the underworld, and Ras Nsi believes the crown is hidden in a tomb beneath the Forbidden City of Omu.”

So, as we end this final preview, we wish the best of luck to all would-be explorers! May you soon find a solution to the horrid death curse. But should you fall along the way, please pay a visit to Nanny Pu’pu. After all, she’s only here to help...

- PDF: [Trickster Gods](#) (pg. 129);
- PDF: [Ras Nsi stats](#) (pg. 230)

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HANDOUT 11: PUZZLE CUBES



QUETZALCOATLUS

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d12 + 4)

Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages —

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Dive Attack. If the quetzalcoatlus is flying and dives at least 30 feet toward a target and then hits with a bite attack, the attack deals an extra 10 (3d6) damage to the target.

Flyby. The quetzalcoatlus doesn't provoke an opportunity attack when it flies out of an enemy's reach.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 2) piercing damage.



RAS NSI

Medium monstrosity (shapechanger, yuan-ti), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (*bracers of defense*)

Hit Points 127 (17d8 + 51) reduced to 107; subtract 1 for each day that passes during the adventure

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +6, Wis +7

Skills Deception +8, Persuasion +8, Religion +7, Stealth +6

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Special Equipment. Ras Nsi wears *bracers of defense*, wields a *flame tongue* longsword, and carries a *sending stone* matched to one carried by the guide Salida (see chapter 1).

Shapechanger. Ras Nsi can use his action to polymorph into a Medium snake or back into his yuan-ti form. His statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. He doesn't change form if he dies.

Innate Spellcasting. Ras Nsi's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *animal friendship* (snakes only)

3/day: *suggestion*

Spellcasting. Ras Nsi is an 11th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Ras Nsi has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *poison spray*

1st level (4 slots): *expeditious retreat*, *false life*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *hold person*, *misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *counterspell*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *blight*, *polymorph*

5th level (2 slots): *contact other plane*, *geas*

6th level (1 slot): *create undead*

Magic Resistance. Ras Nsi has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

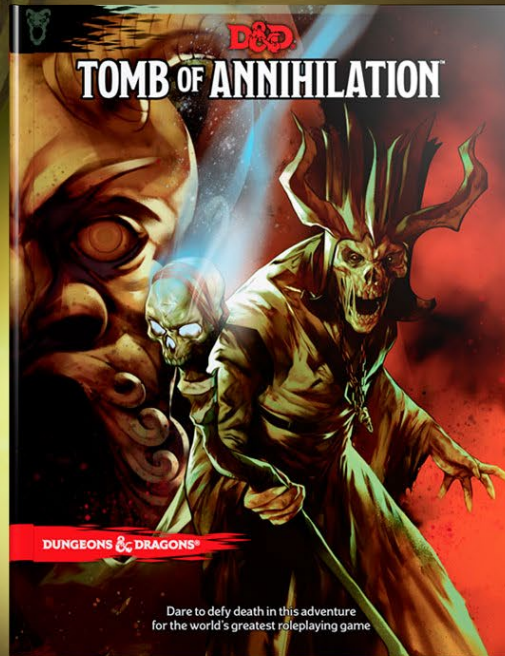
Multiattack. Ras Nsi makes three melee attacks, but can use *Constrict* only once.

Bite (Snake Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and Ras Nsi can't constrict another target.

Flame Tongue Longsword (Yuan-ti Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage when used with two hands, plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

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Fiction: Qawasha and Kupale

By Adam Lee

“The jungle never stops talking. It is an endless stream of buzzing, whistling, clicking, hoots and yelps, along with an array of earthy and pungent smells in a wash of verdant colors, all conveying information to those who can interpret the jumbled code. Those who enter the jungle without a guide are like a raft of fools who set sail on the ocean—within hours they are lost and within days they die. In this great, green tangle of life, every plant is an enigma to those not initiated into the jungle’s mystery school—a translucent berry could regenerate a lost arm, a twisted vine could hold visions of another world, a handful seeds could be a cure for lycanthropy, a drop of toxin from a tiny frog could kill a hill giant. Arrayed in such mysterious splendor is the jungle of Chult, a place of secrets waiting to be discovered. There are expert guides who have studied it their entire lives, and they are still surprised by what it reveals to them.”

— *Jessamine* , Merchant Prince of Chult

Jessamine



Qawasha found himself studying his vegepygmy friend, Kupalué, again.

Kupalué clung to the side of a tree and held himself stock still. Only the small, greenish tendrils that sprouted from his body waved like long anemone tentacles, tasting the air and feeling for vibrations that buzzed and wavered far beyond the range of human senses. As a druid, Qawasha found it fascinating that his friend experienced the forest in ways that he would never comprehend, but sometimes by watching Kupalué, Qawasha felt like, for just a moment, he could come close.

They had been a team for years, working as guides for Jobal the Spider, but Qawasha had known Kupalué for many more. Although he was born in Port Nyanzaru, and had grown up on its colorful streets and bustling docks, Qawasha had found himself pulled deeper and deeper into the body of the jungle. To Qawasha, the jungle was like a large house with many rooms, each one remarkable and with a different character—a mossy glade with enormous umbrella plants, their leaves forming a brilliant green canopy; a hidden pool of clear water beneath a glowing tangle of star berries; a grove of great tumtum trees soaring up like the legs of a colossal beast. There was always another face of the jungle waiting to be revealed, just beyond the next wall of vines, and Qawasha wanted to see its features.

But the main source of intrigue were the ruins. Rare and cryptic places, like the bones of dead gods that spoke of other, more ancient times; these were beyond the safety zones and trade paths through the jungle. Qawasha and all his friends knew of them as youngsters, but even to go to the known ones was to take a great risk. The jungle was filled with all manner of monsters, living and undead, each with its own way of hunting and killing unwary or unprepared prey.

As Qawasha grew stronger, it didn't take him long before he was fast and skilled enough to outrun a ghoul or strike off a zombie's head in one slash, and so he wanted to explore these known ruins... and perhaps one day, even find a long-forgotten one. Every day he would push himself to go deeper and deeper into the jungle, and every day he would discover more and more about its ways. Each trip he would come back with another treasure to show his family and friends—one day he would find a new plant, the next day a new frog, and the next a new snake. But when he found a ruin, even a fragment of one, that was always a day to remember.

Before the foreigners came, most Chultans did not bother with the ruins; they simply saw them as old tombs, sacred spaces, or dark places to avoid. But more and more foreigners came to Chult, and Qawasha could almost categorize those who arrived in Port Nyanzaru by their faces—the treasure hunters looking to get rich, the business-minded ones, those who represented kingdoms that desired minerals and lumber, the adventurers, those down on their luck, the misfits, and the spiritual seekers.

Tomb robbing and treasure hunting had now become common practice around the port towns of Chult; and for the most part, it was the people who dreamed of striking it rich in the ruins that walked off the boats... and were willing to pay a trusty guide good coin for a chance to find it.

The known tombs had been all but picked clean. Like the great fish of legend to the coastal fishermen, treasures were talked about by hunters, merchants and adventurers alike in the smoky taverns and on the dirt trails all over Chult—that the big treasures lay untouched and still hidden by the jungle. Rumors would spark fires of gold fever, and the tales of grisly death would snuff those fires out. Then just when the small coal of hope began to sputter and die, someone would return from the jungle with a ruby the size of a dinosaur egg, and the fire would blaze again. But the jungle did not give up its secrets without its feast of blood, and most who entered it with hopes of wealth untold never returned. So, even though the dream of a golden prize gleamed in every treasure hunter's eye, the deep jungle was a known death trap. Even the most desperate fool would not dare venture too far. There were simply too many ways to die.

Yet it was in those jungle depths where Qawasha met Kupalué.



Jobal



Qawasha was a young man then, but already an experienced guide who knew the forest well. He had more money than most as he worked hard, and had a way with clients that inspired confidence and reassured fears, but over time, Qawasha began to see a shift. The jungles were growing more and more dangerous, and still the push from the foreigners to extract resources was increasing. At first, Qawasha saw only the money that Jobal the Spider was putting into his hand to guide miners and merchants, traders and trappers, but it wasn't until Qawasha had lived enough years that he began to see things in Nyanzaru and in Chult going in a direction that didn't sit well with him. Gold and money had become a creature, some great, tentacled kraken that was always reaching for more, ready to latch on and drag an unwary soul down to its suffocating abyssal lair. He saw this manifest as an unquenchable urgency from the foreigners who hacked into the forest under pain of death from far away lords, an urgency that was spread like an energetic disease to the people they encountered.

This led to Qawasha taking more and more treks into the jungle by himself. Disturbed by what he saw, Qawasha began to study druidic ways and sought out tribal elders who recognized his earnest heart,

and eagerly took him under their wings, teaching him the old chants and spells. It was there he began to hear the stories of Ubtao, the god who had left because the Chultan people had become corrupt and lazy, and had lost their respect for Ubtao's will. The more he learned, the more Qawasha wondered if he could somehow come to find Ubtao in the jungle, hidden in some ancient and forgotten shrine. If he could only find this place, this one ruin among all other ruins, perhaps he could then beg forgiveness for his people, and maybe the god would return to guide them and protect them from the madness he felt and saw all around him.

In his quest to find Ubtao, Qawasha forced himself to face the terrible dangers of the jungle. Still, the further into the unknown he pushed, the more he learned. Through the osmosis of observation—watching the trees, plants and animals of the jungle—he learned that death and life were one thing, much like the two sides of a single coin. From decay, new life is born and nourished, and from the joys and pains of the past, one gains wisdom to guide the future. He learned that in silence, another world of great aliveness comes into being with its own intelligence. But he also learned that somewhere, deep in the heart of the world, evil had become lodged like a thorn, and the pain of it could be felt in the minds and violence of mortals. The jungle was opening Qawasha up like a flower, humbling him, and making him think about his role in life in a much wiser way.

That's when he met Kupalué.

It was a day much like any other day; Qawasha traveled to a favorite spot, several days into the jungle, a place of serenity and, he felt, a certain sacred power. As he sat on an embankment where a stream the color of black tea bubbled below, Qawasha entered a state of meditation and opened himself to the jungle. His teachers had shown him many things, the mutability of life and nature, the malleable and fluid nature of stone and earth, the connection between the elements; all these things he pondered while the jungle breathed and pulsed around him. That's when he felt a gentle touch on his forehead. Qawasha opened one eye to see a greenish tendril retract like a snail's eyestalk upon being touched. Connected to it, he saw a curious vegepygmy staring back at him.

“Hello, friend.” Qawasha said.

TO BE CONTINUED...

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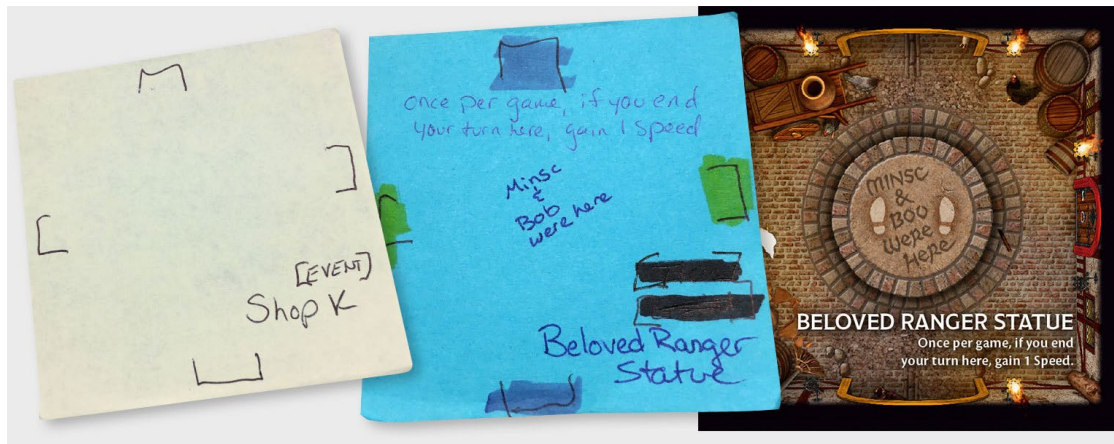
Making of Betrayal at Bauldur's Gate

Game developer Chris Dupuis takes us from Post-It note to published game, as he shares the design process for Betrayal at Baldur's Gate.

Betrayal at House on the Hill is one of my favorite board games. It's a glorious mess of B-movie horror tropes, all tied together with a pair of kids running around a haunted house with a group of adults who, honestly, should know better. The year was 2016, and we had just recently released *Widow's Walk*, the first expansion to the eleven-year-old game. I was still riding high on the excitement of the reinvigorated base game when Shelly Mazzanoble (Avalon Hill's brand manager) told me her nefarious plan.

With a few simple words, I had pivoted from post-release excitement to deep design thinking, mulling over all the ways we could inject

even more mayhem into the system by marrying it with my favorite TRPG: *Dungeons & Dragons*. I've worked as a game designer on the D&D team for six years, and after I put the final touches on this game, I moved into a new role at Wizards of the Coast. I couldn't have picked a better game than *Betrayal at Baldur's Gate* to end this chapter of my design career.



How a Post-It note becomes a board game.(Select to view)

The mantra throughout design & development was that this was a *Betrayal* game at its heart.

In our first design meeting, I, along with Shelly, Mike Mearls, Ben Petrisor, and Adam Lee, talked about what makes *Betrayal* a unique and exciting game—elements we would want to capture going forward. The game had to have tiles and a sprawling board that grew and changed each time you played. It had to have Omen, Item, and Event cards. We discussed the pros and cons of tweaking character traits to make them more like D&D abilities, but stuck with Might, Speed, Knowledge, and Sanity because of how resonant they are with established *Betrayal* fans (and because distilling the six D&D abilities down to four traits always felt like something was lacking, no matter how we tried to shuffle things around).

Because we were building the city of *Baldur's Gate*, we needed to move away from the ground, basement, and upper floor ideas of the house. But we loved the ideas of having different levels within the city. Sewer (later changed to Catacomb) and City levels were easy analogs, but we wanted to give the idea of a sprawling city above, and a cramped, dangerous catacomb below. The street tiles came out of a discussion on how to make the upper level unique and to give players some measure of choice the more you played the game. (It

also allowed us to use known locations in Baldur's Gate that would resonate with fans of the iconic city.) We played around with a few ways to build the city level, and eventually landed on the idea of colored doorways dictating the type of tile you draw.



I think Emi beat me in the graphic design battle. (Select to view)

After a few iterations, I had built a basic 40-plus tile playtest set. We created some test haunts, and used the cards from the *Betrayal* base game (removing all the cards that referenced specific rooms) to run initial playtests. Once we were confident in the way the city would grow, we needed to figure out how we were going to fit more than 40 years of D&D into just 50 haunts! Adam, Ben, and Mike sat down and started sketching out ideas. Some were as simple as: “Kobolds: Might have stolen an item or infested the sewers?” or “Flesh Golem: Is the Traitor helping to collect body parts”? Some were so close to the final haunt it’s... haunting: “Sphere of Annihilation: Destroys the board! Fight for control of the amulet.”

While they were creating the initial kernels of the haunts, I was

figuring out how to build adventurers who would fight for the very soul of *Baldur's Gate*. I tried to make flavorful decisions on how each trait grouping worked with the race/class of the chosen adventurer. In order to make them feel more heroic than the base game, I gave each adventurer a unique ability based on their class. These powers were some of the first mechanics designed for the game, and they were also one of the last things to lock down.

Have you ever had a *Betrayal at House on the Hill* game where you have an unlucky roll and the haunt is triggered with the first Omen, causing the whole game to end way too quickly? Well I have, and it can definitely be frustrating. I worked with a couple of super-talented designers who came up with the idea to redesign the haunt roll. After a few playtests with both newbies and veterans, it was clear we were on the right track. The new roll prevents the haunt from triggering too early, giving players plenty of time to explore the city and collect (hopefully) useful items.

As we all left for the holiday break, we had an initial list of more than 30 haunt ideas and a group of internal designers excited to throw some ideas around on paper. When I returned, I transitioned from a member of the design team to the lead developer. My main goal was to make each haunt: 1) Fun & balanced for both sides; 2) True to both D&D & *Betrayal*; and 3) As close to the original designer's intent as possible. I also wanted this game to be easy to jump into for those familiar with *Betrayal at House on the Hill*. I realized that the quick introduction that I gave to playtesters would be a great way to introduce established players to the new game.

And so, on January 9, 2017, we had our first official playtest of *Betrayal at Baldur's Gate* with nine developed haunts in the queue. At this point, we were still working with the cards from the base game. The first few months of the year I had three-to-four playtest cycles a week, with two-to-four tables running concurrently during each gameplay session. Sometimes I had three versions of the same haunt, sometimes I had multiple haunts in various stages of development ready for each table. But each time, my playtesters (the real heroes of this game) showed up ready to roll some dice, not knowing if they were facing an umber hulk or a doppelganger that day. The months blended together as I juggled over a dozen haunts in my head at any one point, each day getting a few of them closer to

being locked down.



“Yes. I’m a badger with a Berserker Axe. COME AT ME!” ~Actual playtest quote. (Select to view)

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OBJECT OF THE GAME

Explore the city of Baldur's Gate and make your adventurer stronger until the haunt begins. After that, your goal is to complete your side's victory condition first, either as a traitor or a hero.

ALREADY FAMILIAR WITH *BETRAYAL AT HOUSE ON THE HILL*?

Here are the Big Changes:

A new haunt roll: When you make a haunt roll, roll dice *equal* to the number of omen cards already revealed. If you roll *6 or higher* (6+), the haunt is triggered.

A new way to determine first player: Everyone takes a player aid card at the start of the game. Whoever has the card with the lowest number goes first!

Adventurers: Instead of explorers, this game has adventurers. Adventurers each have a unique **adventurer power** that can be used throughout the game.

City levels: Instead of 3 floors in the house, the city of Baldur's Gate has 2 levels: **city** and **catacomb**. The city level includes **building tiles** and **street tiles**, while the catacomb level includes **catacomb tiles**.

Tile stacks: At the start of the game, lay out the 2 longer starting tiles and separate the rest of the tiles by the color of their backs, creating 3 stacks of tiles.

Doorway color matters when exiting: When you exit a tile, look at the color of the doorway. The tile you discover will come from the tile stack with that color.

Sewer grates: Sewer grates allow a one-way drop to the Catacomb Landing tile.

Stairs: The Kitchen and Weapon Shop tiles have **stairs** that connect to their matching basement tiles. Both the Kitchen and the Kitchen Basement are on the board at the start of the game, which will allow you to travel between them. To use the stairs on the Weapon Shop or the Weapon Shop Basement, you'll need to find both of those tiles.

Stealing: You can steal an item or omen if you would deal 2 or more points of any type of damage, not just physical damage.

Established Betrayal fans can turn to page three in the rulebook to learn all they need to know. (Select to view)

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being locked down.

During the early playtests, I noticed veteran players breaking the tiles into three unique piles based on their type. I had initially ignored that option because some early iterations of the tiles had buildings that could be found both on the city level and the catacombs, but thanks to the playtesters, we have three unique piles and a lot of time saved not having to flip through the deck to find the tile you need!

During development, Mike Mearls traveled to South Korea, and he designed all of the cards during his flight out. Once I had the cards, my already rigorous playtest schedule included updating the stickered cards in four playtest versions of the game before almost every session. Boy that was a lot of stickering! The Symbol of Bhaal moved from the item deck to the Omen deck, the Deck of Many things had many, many updates (it's still my favorite card in the game), and the Iron Flask of Tuerny continued to create epic finales! Seriously, who brought a balor to a back-alley fight? Oh yeah. We did.



Playtest tiles versus final versions. (Select to view)

During development, I saw that players were really connecting with

their characters, so I created a cycle of event cards that had benefits if you were playing the right character.

One of the last changes to the game was one that was bothering me from early in the playtests. Because of our experience with the base game, we always envisioned the catacombs as a scary place. It has the highest ratio of Omen cards, and more tiles that can hurt you. We had sewer grates which were one-way trips to the Catacomb Landing. In true *Betrayal* fashion, once you go down there, you have to find your way out by exploring to uncover the stairs in the Kitchen Basement or the Weapon Shop Basement.



Going through a sewer drops you onto the Catacomb Landing, or you could just go down the Kitchen Stairs. (Select to view)

We had a core group of playtesters who loved to dive into the catacombs and seek adventure, but we also had games where players refused to go down the sewer grate. “I’ve been stuck in the lower levels during a haunt before, and it’s no fun!” Because most of the ways into the catacombs weren’t forced, we lost the ability to see the catacombs as a necessary evil (as the basement is seen in the base game), and we gave players an easy excuse to opt-out.

It was too late in the development process for me to unilaterally make the change, even though I knew it was right for the game. I needed an ally! After a few days of mulling over the issue I presented Shelly with a couple of options. Shelly agreed, but only after I made movement via the stairs an additional space of movement. That way, moving down into the catacombs still had a cost. We brought Shauna Narciso (senior creative art director) in on the plan, who worked with

Scott to merge the two tiles.

Now, instead of the Catacomb Landing being the sole catacomb tile at the start of the game, you also have the Kitchen Basement as a start tile. You can go down to the catacombs right away if you want, and no matter which way you go (sewer grate or stairs), you have a way out. You know, in case a morkoth decides to flood the catacombs or something.



Almost 200 games were played to bring you Betrayal at Baldur's Gate. Many adventurers sacrificed, so many days saved. (Select to view)

Eventually, development was marked complete as I shipped the last group of files over to our amazing editor Jennifer Clarke-

Wilkes, who helped the game more than I can say. Seriously, budding game designers: find a great editor. It'll be the best decision you make for your game. At the same time, I started working with Emi Kuioka, our wonderful graphic designer, who took my months-old word files and turned them into gorgeous PDFs. Even though I said development was complete, here's the horrible truth: development is *never* complete. You just have to put your pencil down when your project manager wrenches it from your hands—thanks Heather Fleming!

There was a particularly squirrely haunt dealing with demon summoning that took an additional six playtests to get just right. In the end, it is probably my favorite haunt in the game. Eventually, I bugged Jennifer and Emi with my final “one last update!” email, and the game was locked.

Now that I have it in hand, I can proudly say that it's my final design credit (for now). While I poured my heart and soul into the game, it was truly a group effort. I couldn't be prouder of the team that Shelly assembled to put this awesome game together, and I hope you enjoy playing it as much as we enjoyed creating it for you!

Chris Dupuis is a Game Producer at Wizards of the Coast. In his past

life as a Game Designer, he worked on titles such as Heroscape, Risk Legacy, Betrayal at House on the Hill: Widow's Walk, and the Lords of Waterdeep expansions. When he's not making games, he's probably off on an adventure with his wife and their 4-year-old daughter. You can follow his personal & professional adventures on twitter [@gameguruchris](#).

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BHAAL IS COMING



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WizKids' Zev Shlasinger previews the Tomb of Annihilation Board Game, featuring traps worthy of Acererak himself

Sweat trickles down your neck as you hack away at the vines of the humid jungle. Strange cries echo in the distance. It could simply be a jungle cat or exotic bird, but you know better. You know the horrors that lurk out there. These aren't the familiar lands of the Sword Coast or the Dessarin Valley, and the creatures that inhabit this place are wilier than dragons! These are the jungles of Chult.



The Tomb of Annihilation Board Game from WizKids and Wizards of the Coast is designed by Kevin Wilson. It is the fifth game to use the D&D adventure system, and is fully compatible with other games in the series. Players take up the roles of brave adventurers seeking to accomplish a variety of quests and storylines, each featuring a randomized dungeon board, so no two playthroughs are exactly alike. (Select to view)

Tomb of Annihilation is the latest Dungeons & Dragons storyline to get the board game treatment, but the adventure movie setting it sits within hasn't been ignored in favor of a traditional dungeon crawl.

“For the first time we have outdoor tiles, representing the jungles of Chult,” says Zev Shlasinger, director of board games at WizKids. “Having two kinds of dungeon tiles—the outdoor jungle tiles and the indoor tomb tiles—was a major challenge. It split the library of tiles available in the box, so we really focused on making many of the adventures use both sets of tiles.”

Not that the danger subsides once



(Select to view)

you enter Acererak’s Tomb of the Nine Gods. Its cool recesses may provide shelter from the unforgiving heat, the dinosaurs—both living and undead—that stalk you, and the tribes of goblins warming their supper pots as they lay in wait to capture you. But as you drain your canteen and wipe the beads from your brow, ready to venture below, there’s a very

real threat the Tomb of Annihilation will live up to its name and become your tomb...

“The classic *Tomb of Horrors* module was known as a deadly adventure, so we wanted to make this more difficult,” says Shlasinger. “One big new addition to the *Tomb of Annihilation Board Game* are the ‘Trap’ and ‘Spell’ decks, which will make things more dangerous. When special Trap tiles are revealed, you’ll draw from the all-new Trap deck. These cards do many different things, including casting magic, teleporting, rotating a tile, trapping heroes on a tile, etc. They can be disabled as a normal action but some of the more complex traps will trigger again on a failed disable roll.”

Dead-end Death

While those traps are designed to test your mettle, the designers weren't looking to wipe out a party without at least giving them some chance of survival. Luckily, playtesting threw up some interesting scenarios that were even more deadly than they had initially been intended.

“There is an adventure involving a Juggernaut that is trying to steamroll you, “Shlasinger reveals. “We had added some dead-end tiles in the game to make the tomb interesting, but upon playtesting this adventure, we realized that it could happen that all those dead-end tiles could be drawn sequentially, locking players in place to be squished. We had to open things up after that.”

This is the fifth entry in Wizards of the Coast's line of Adventure System board games, following *Castle Ravenloft*, *Wrath of Ashardalon*, *The Legend of Drizzt*, and *Temple of Elemental Evil*, and all five games are fully compatible. While the mechanics are the same and many of the components are interchangeable, it isn't simply the jungle setting that has been updated for this fifth game.



(Select to view)

“Fundamentally, they work the same. For example, we have not changed the way a turn happens, although some extra things may happen during known phases of the game,” says Shlasinger. “A game can consist of a solo adventure, and you can play them out of order, or all five of the characters can band together for a campaign of thirteen adventures that start outdoors and head into the tomb.”

The Cat's Meow

Those five characters also include a new possible role for players: the bard. The character class is being introduced into the board games

system for the first time, and this tabaxi character joins a human ranger, a saurial paladin, an aarakocra wizard, and a human druid.

“While the class doesn’t add anything more specific than bard powers the player can access, those powers do help other heroes, so the bard is a good support character,” says Shlasinger. “The bard is also a tabaxi, a race not used in the series before, and she has a power that allows her to possibly avoid triggering traps.”

Together that party will play their part in the larger *Tomb of Annihilation* storyline, although Shlasinger describes their involvement as being “more in a macro way”.

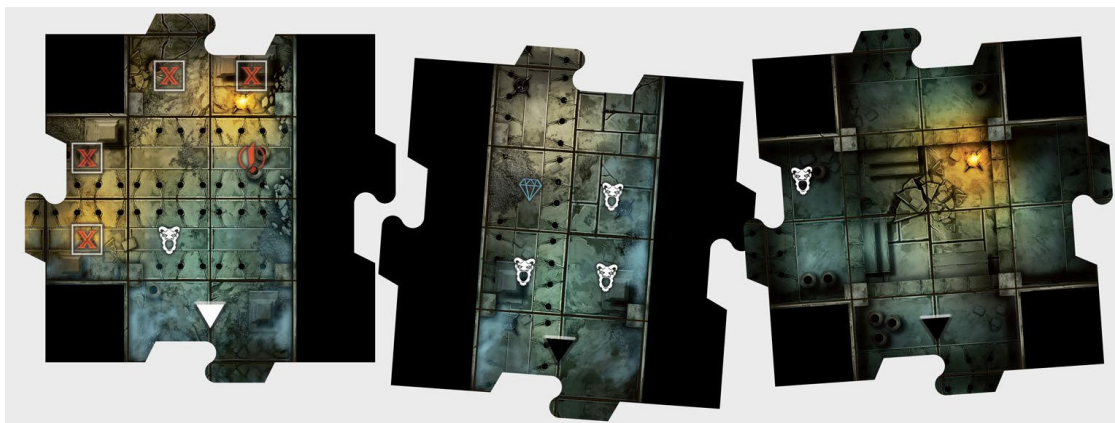
“The adventurers are here to stop the death curse that dominates that storyline, and they know it is coming from deep within the jungle of Chult. The campaign takes them through that jungle into the Tomb of the Nine Gods, where they will eventually encounter Acererak the archlich. You want to make good and challenging villains, and we hope we have accomplished that.”



(Select to view)

Acererak won’t be the only major figure the party must overcome, but as with any quest, there will be rewards. In some cases, the bigger the challenge, the better the treasure. “There are many treasures you can obtain through defeating monsters. For example, one special item can only be obtained from a specific monster: if you defeat Ras Nsi, you can claim his flaming sword,” Shlasinger says.

Naturally, these foes will be brought to life using mini-figures, cards, or tokens. There have already been previews of the excellent Icons of the Realms: *Tomb of Annihilation* minis, and the board game similarly includes some exciting creatures from this jungle region, which is known for its savage monsters and dinosaurs.



(Select to view)

“There will be velociraptors to represent the dinosaurs, and we have jungle natives such as the vegpeygy warriors and the Batiri goblins, as well as other creatures including su-monsters, fire newts, and several undead,” Shlasinger says. “Also, for those who haven’t heard, there is a premium version that comes with fully painted minis!”

The game is still to launch when we speak to Shlasinger, so we’re keen to know what elements she thinks will engage players. “There are so many new things being introduced into the adventure game system with *Tomb of Annihilation*. Monsters can now gain conditions, and we’ve tweaked the ability to cancel Encounter cards by spending more Experience points as you delve deeper into the adventure. There are several other new things as well that we can’t wait for players to experience, but we are really looking forward to seeing if everyone else loves the new Spell and Trap decks as much as we do. We think this opens up the design space to an exciting level and we hope everyone agrees.”

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Tales from Candlekeep

Developer BKOM Studios shares the trials and the triumphs of transforming the Tomb of Annihilation Board Game into the digital version Tales from Candlekeep.

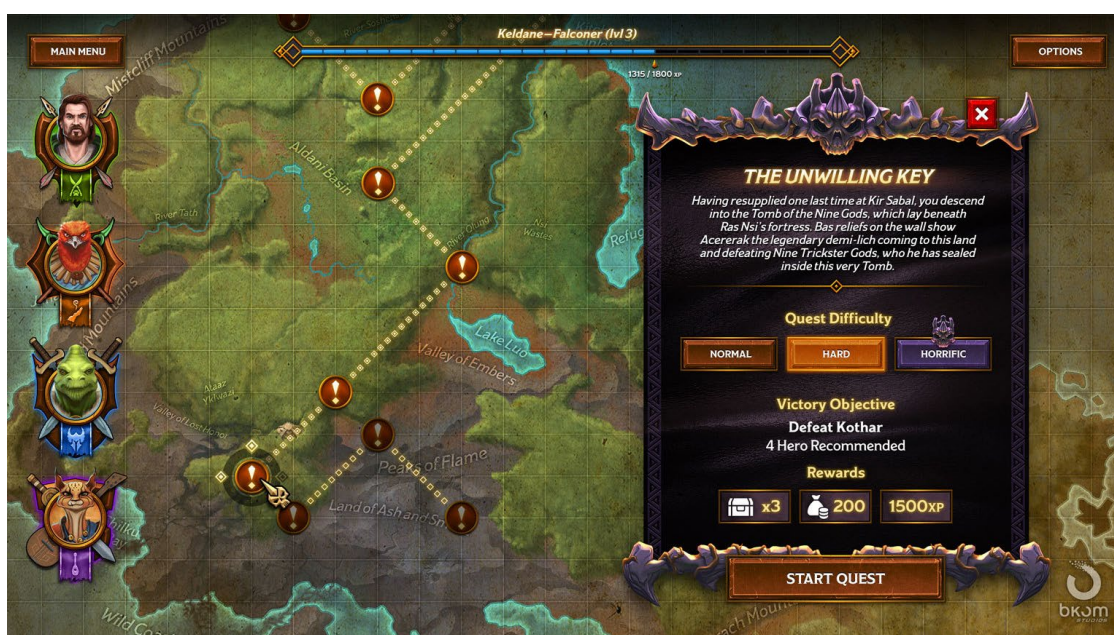
On paper, it seems easy. With an existing *Tomb of Annihilation Board Game* in production and an Adventure System template that has been around since 2010, it should be a breeze to take a physical board game and create a digital version. Unfortunately, anyone who believes that process is a picnic is actually a few sandwiches short of that outdoor meal. As developer BKOM Studios can confirm, board games and video games are very different animals.

“It is similar but it is not exactly the same game,” reveals game designer Olivier Latouche. “*Tomb of Annihilation* is the fifth iteration of the Adventure System but this is the first digital version,” adds producer Paul Gadbois. “The gameplay rules and all the mechanics have been evolving through the years, so we had a lot of content to work with.”

“Although we adapted the main mechanics, we tweaked things to

take advantage of the digital medium,” Latouche continues. “For example, we wanted the digital version to have a faster pace than the board game, so we chose to automate some actions, like dice throws and card shuffling. The game feels faster because players don’t need to manage as many components as they do in the tabletop board game, and they can focus on their strategy rather than keeping track of everything.”

If this sounds like a radical reworking, you’ll be glad to hear that many of the elements of the original game have been left untouched. Case in point, Gadbois assures us that the tiles, which are placed randomly as players move around, operate in the same way.



We tweaked things to take advantage of the digital medium. (Select to view)

“We have the same board feeling, so when players explore—inside or outside—the tiles appear and fit into place, just as would happen in the board game where you place the tile yourself to determine how the dungeon would be laid out,” he says.

“It’s about finding the right balance,” confirms Latouche. “It’s about keeping that board game experience, where you can feel that little puzzle notch where the tiles fit together. But we have added in fully animated characters, environments, sounds, special effects and elements that pop up from the board.”

“Everything is animated, as you would expect in any 3D adventure,” says Gadbois. “The digital version comes to life, with full lighting

and visual effects, as well as custom animations for pretty much all the characters. Obviously, we are also adding in the kind of props you would expect to see in a dungeon, like coffins, lanterns, and torches.”

Getting Started

With so many changes to the nature of the game to make it work as a digital entity, *Dragon+* is keen to discover the first steps that need to be trodden when translating an existing board game.

“First you need to establish the core mechanics and the features of the game. Find out what makes the board game unique and what it’s renowned for,” Latouche says. “After that you have to prioritize these features, to find what works for a video game and what needs to be changed or removed completely.”

Originally developed on the tabletop for a single-player or a cooperative group of two-to-five players, the video game will focus on that first option at launch.

“It is a single-player game at the moment,” Latouche explains, “although you do have control of four or five characters. So you follow the format where one hero plays first and events happen, then the next hero plays—the same as you would in the tabletop version, but as a single-player experience.

“We still think the title should become multiplayer at some point. That would be a subsequent phase. We want to nail the single-player version and make that awesome, before introducing network play and multiplayer at a later date.”

BKOM Studios also entertained the idea of making *Tales from Candlekeep* run on mobile and tablet devices, before settling on a PC and Mac version. Gadbois and his team felt that mobile devices wouldn’t handle the modern graphics of a PC game without needing a lot of optimization.

“Mobile and tablets are currently not our focus. A mobile version hasn’t been discarded, so we’re not giving you a definitive answer that we’re not going to do that. But currently our focus is on the PC experience,” Gadbois says.

Game Plan

The need to appeal to a different type of gamer was in itself a driver of change. If you're lucky, a board game might see the light of day once every week, as friends gather around a tabletop. Yet a video game, especially a single-player game, might travel with you and make a much more regular appearance in your leisure time. BKOM Studios knew it had to design additional elements to keep those kind of gamers interested for longer.

“We designed new features with that in mind,” Latouche says. “We added in crafting and upgrading your gear, which is considered more of an end-game goal for players. We wanted to bring that kind of replayability to the game, to keep people interested.”

While heroes can still collect items and treasures throughout their explorations, that crafting system now allows video game players to create new gear for their characters. A global inventory system called The Collection stores all the crafting materials players find in chests and tombs. These are then used to generate items of equipment in four categories: primary and secondary weapons; armor; and accessories. For example, crafting a stronger dagger adds its increased bonus to all of a hero's applicable powers, like throws and damage, while stronger armor means higher HP and Armor Class.



In Tales from Candlekeep, it is the player's profile which levels up, not the hero's. (Select to view)

“As for achievements, all modern video games now have those, so it’s no different in ours. We added difficulties to our quests, which is also different from the board game, so players can complete them all up to ‘Horrific’ difficulty. The game’s achievement list might also ask a player to repeat the last quest only using the most basic equipment, or with only a single hero on the hardest difficulty,” says Latouche.

Leveling Up

Those who have played an Adventure System board game will know that these tabletop adventures mimic a D&D roleplaying experience, by tracking a player’s progress as they develop. According to Latouche, that progression system has also been greatly changed in *Tales from Candlekeep*.

“The first thing to know is that it is the player’s profile which levels up, and not the hero’s,” he says. “The first level dictates when a new hero can be unlocked, but the player will also be rewarded for every five, ten, twenty-five and one hundred levels he or she reaches. There’s no level cap, as we wanted players to be able to level up quickly and be rewarded very often.”

With this being the first ever digital version of an Adventure System title, it naturally lacks another element of its tabletop predecessors: the ability for all of the board games to be linked up. Players enjoying the physical games can mix and match elements of *Castle Ravenloft*, *Wrath of Ashardalon*, *The Legend of Drizzt*, and *Temple of Elemental Evil*. However, BKOM Studios ends our discussion with the exciting news that other adventures may make an appearance at some point.

“The current approach is that we’re building a ‘Digital Adventure System’, with the first campaign being *Tomb of Annihilation*,” Latouche adds, revealing that the team plans to go back and introduce other campaigns as DLC expansion packs.

“This is still very early in the planning phase and we’re currently focusing on the first release. But as a good developer we want to support the community by offering some free content and patches, as well as some additional campaigns that can be purchased. And we do plan to support the game for a very long time.”

Tales from Candlekeep is scheduled for release for Mac and Windows this Fall and will be **available on Steam**.

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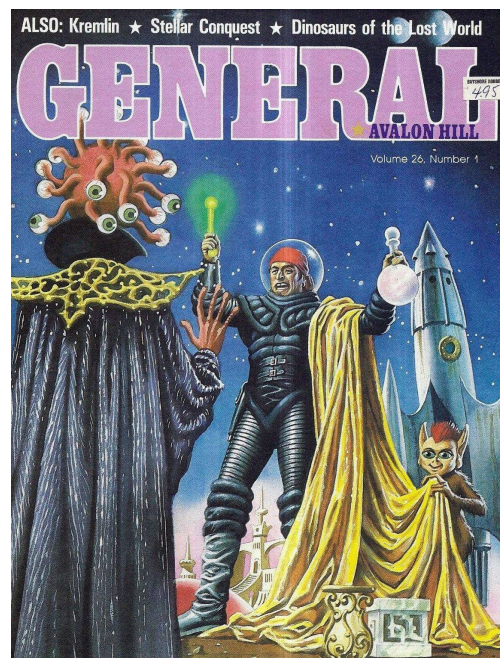


Dragon Retro

From the Dragon archives, we look back at the games offered directly through the magazine!

The General

While TSR published *Dragon*, Avalon Hill likewise had its own publication, *The General*. The magazine ran from 1964 all the way to 1998 (with Avalon Hill's acquisition by Hasbro), offering previews, tutorials, and strategy articles for Avalon Hill games. In



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this issue, previewing the latest Avalon Hill game, *Betrayal at Baldur's Gate*, we wanted to call out Thomas Shaw, Don Greenwood, Rex Martin, Don Hawthorne, Gary Fortenberry, Robert Waters, and Stuart Tucker for their years with *The General!*

Despite its genesis as a magazine covering Dungeons & Dragons, it may be more fair to say that *Dragon Magazine* started as a publication dedicated to the joy of gaming, with an obvious focus on D&D. Even from its earliest days, there had always been space reserved for broader gaming concerns—including the creation of its own original board games.

A listing of these games has been helpfully chronicled over at boardgamegeek.com, several of which were then collected into *The Best of Dragon Magazine Games* (1990). At least one, Tom Wham's *The Awful Green Things from Outer Space*, even moved beyond the magazine, later acquired and republished by Steve Jackson Games.

For this issue, we wanted to call out a few more games, as well as offer their PDF rules for your enjoyment. First, with D&D's next storyline taking place in the dinosaur-filled jungles of Chult, how could we not include *Dino Wars*? And from there, we move from playing with plastic dinosaurs and army men, to sculpting your own figures out of modeling clay (or to pay homage to our parent company, Play-Doh!), with *Clay-O-Rama*.

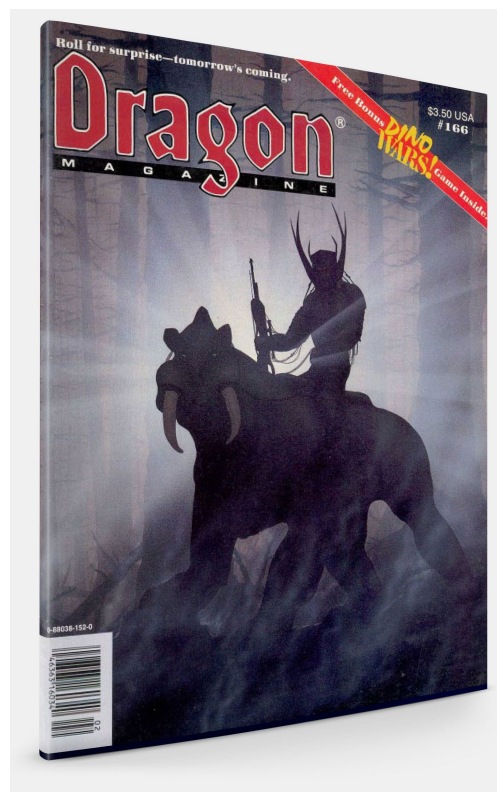
Dino Wars

Dragon 166 (February 1991)

focused on science-fiction in roleplaying games... including rules for this game, perhaps following 1990's publication of the novel *Jurassic Park*. And now that D&D campaigns are soon heading to Chult, a jungle filled with dinosaurs, zombies, and dinosaur zombies, how could we not look back at a game that pits plastic dinosaur vs. little green army men?

Tomb of Annihilation hits shelves September 19, and as alternate rules for running dinosaur battles, you might consider modifying *Dino Wars* for your campaign.

Tom Moldvay created the rules (designer, of among many other things, *XI Isle of Dread*, one of the influences for *Tomb of Annihilation*).



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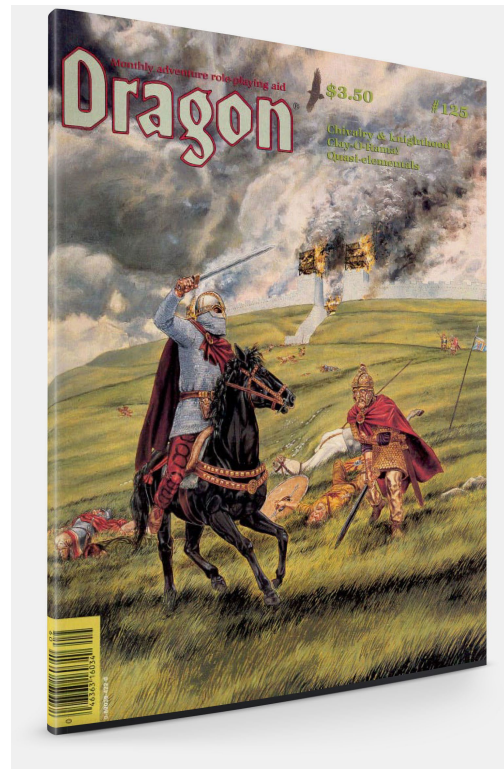
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Clay-O-Rama

Dragon 125 (September 1987) featured articles on knights and chivalry. While I'm not entirely sure where *Clay-O-Rama* fit into the issue, I heartily support rules that involved staging battles between modeling clay-based figures. David "Zeb" Cook (who also designed *Isle of Dread*!) crafted the following rules as a "miniatures melodrama for all ages". Further campaign rules would later appear in *Dragon* 144

(April 1989): *Claydonia Conquers the World!*

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DINO WARS!

ARMY VS. DINOSAURS: THE FIGHT IS ON!

BY TOM MOLDVAY

Private Bill Smith crouched behind a boulder—not that the rock offered much protection from dinosaurs. But old habits die hard, and a soldier is trained to seek cover. Out in the mists, he heard the great beasts roaring. Bill took a deep breath and double-checked his loads. It wouldn't be long now.

The roaring grew nearer, and the ground shook. Bill wished he'd signed up for the tank corps. At least tankers had some protection.

The mist parted and a horror emerged. It was an allosaurus, as high as a second-floor window and as long as a house. Its brownish-gray skin glistened in the misty light. But all Bill had eyes for were its dagger-like claws and gaping mouth, filled with teeth that could rip a person in half.

The rest of Bill's squad spotted the dinosaur and opened up. Sharp rifle cracks filled the air. Off to his right, the staccato sputtering of the squad's machine gun could be heard. Bill didn't bother to aim. He just pointed his rifle and fired. The allosaurus was so big you couldn't miss. The problem was hitting a vital area. The beast didn't have any. Only massed fire would bring it down—if they were lucky.

They weren't.

The allosaurus lumbered right through the hail of gunfire, which merely made it angrier, and smashed into the skirmish line a dozen yards to Bill's left. Bill heard a crunching sound, then a horrible scream that ended in

the gurgling cry of "Mother!" It sounded like PFC Sam Moran, but the screaming was so different from Sam's normal voice that Bill couldn't be sure.

"You dirty lizard! You killed Sam! Eat lead, lizard spawn!" The shouting was from Sergeant Savage, who had been in line next to Sam. Cradling a tommy gun in her hands, the sergeant leaped from cover and ran straight for the allosaurus, firing burst after burst until her weapon was empty. The bullets stitched into the monster, which bellowed in rage and pain.

Sergeant Savage ripped a hand grenade from her belt. Pulling the pin with her teeth, she lobbed the grenade at the dinosaur's head. Then she dove to earth.

The explosion ripped into the allosaurus, blowing apart its jaw and half its neck. The dinosaur took one hesitant step forward—then it toppled. The earth shook with the impact of its fall.

A ragged cheer rang out from the squad.

The allosaurus was dead. They were still alive. But they had little time for celebrating. Out in the mists, Bill could already hear yet another wave of dinosaurs massing for the attack.

DINO WARS! is a set of miniatures rules that simulates combat between dinosaurs and army soldiers. The emphasis is on fictional combat as it appears in grade-B science-fiction movies and novels. The result is a set of rules that are easy to learn, with play that is both fun and fast.

All that's required for a game of DINO WARS! are these rules, some miniature soldiers and dinosaurs (cheap, colorful, plastic ones are best), a ruler or yardstick, and two six-sided dice (d6).



Two players are required (one for the army and one for the dinosaurs), although more can be added (to run several squads of soldiers or groups of dinosaurs).

DINO WARS! is broken down into game turns. Each game turn has five phases that must be completed in order. The game continues until one side is completely eliminated or one side fulfills its mission.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

1. Dinosaur Movement Phase
 - 1a. Closing fire
 - 1b. Overrun attacks
2. Regular Fire Phase
3. Dinosaur Attack Phase
4. Army Movement Phase
5. Secondary Fire Phase

1. DINOSAUR MOVEMENT PHASE

All dinosaurs can move during this phase. Each dinosaur can move any distance to the limit allowed by its movement rate, given in scale inches on the Dinosaur Statistics table (with modifiers from the Dinosaur Movement Modifiers table, as appropriate). Flying movement is measured specially, with both horizontal and vertical factors counted together for a

MOVEMENT AND ATTACKS

The controlling player always has the choice of how figures move and attack. Thus, a player could move one dinosaur and make all its overrun attacks before moving the next dinosaur. Likewise, soldiers need not declare their targets ahead of time. They might fire at one dinosaur until they kill it, then switch to another target. The choice of the order of movement and fire is part of the strategy of the game.

total movement rate (for example, a pterodactyl moving 12" upward and 24" forward has moved 36" total). If a dinosaur makes overrun attacks (see "Closing Fire and Overrun Attacks," below), there is a 2" movement penalty per overrun attack. If the optional rules are being used, there is also a 2" penalty for any unusual terrain (see "Optional Rules").

Closing Fire and Overrun Attacks. The Dinosaur Movement Phase has two special subphases. If a dinosaur makes contact with a soldier or vehicle figure, and the monster decides to make an overrun attack (for example, it decides to stamp on the army figure), the defender gets a chance to shoot before the dinosaur can attack. Such shooting is called closing fire.

All hand weapons, except grenades, can be used during closing fire. A soldier firing a hand weapon



in closing fire does not need to worry about line of sight, and is able to see the dinosaur perfectly well. All machine guns can also fire, but each requires a line of sight to do so (they're harder to move). Line of sight for a machine gun extends in a 180-degree arc to its front. Thus, a machine gun nest taking an overrun attack from the rear will not get closing fire. Other weapons, such as a tank gun or a mortar, do not get closing fire.

A vehicle gets closing fire only if it has a machine gun mounted on it, and if the gun has a line of sight to the dinosaur. Only one closing-fire attack per figure can be made. A figure attacked by more than one dinosaur gets closing fire only on the first dinosaur to attack.

A dinosaur that makes contact with a soldier or a vehicle during movement can make an overrun attack, which slows the dinosaur down, subtracting 2" from its movement rate. If a dinosaur does not have at least 2" of movement left when it makes contact, an overrun attack cannot be made. (Any dinosaur killed during closing fire is eliminated and gets no further attacks.)

If the overrun attack succeeds and the soldier is killed or the vehicle destroyed, the dinosaur can continue movement. The dinosaur can keep moving and making overrun attacks as long as it has enough movement to pay the overrun cost, and as long as each overrun attack succeeds.

An overrun attack fails if the defender survives. The defender survives if the attacking dinosaur rolls a miss, if the dinosaur doesn't destroy a vehicle (see "Damage"), or if the soldier is a special figure who makes a successful luck roll (see "Special Army Figures" and "Damage").

If an overrun attack fails, the dinosaur ends its movement in contact with the defender, and play continues normally. The defender cannot make closing fire, but might be able to fire again during the Regular Fire Phase. The dinosaur can attack again (providing it survives regular fire) during the Dinosaur Attack Phase.

The choice of whether or not to make an overrun attack is up to the dinosaur player. A player can always choose to stop movement for a dinosaur and not make an overrun attack. The dinosaur can still attack normally, however, just as the soldier can fire normally.

Example. A tyrannosaurus with a movement of 18" begins the turn 4" from a line of skirmishers. The tyrannosaurus moves 4" to attack the closest soldier. The soldier fires but does not kill the monster. The tyrannosaurus kills the soldier in an overrun, thus using up 2" more movement. The next soldier is 2" away. The dinosaur moves to that target, survives closing fire, and kills the soldier in another overrun.

The tyrannosaurus has now spent 10" on movement (4 + 2 + 2 + 2).

There is a soldier only 1" away. The tyrannosaurus moves to attack, once more survives closing fire, and kills its third victim in the turn, at the cost of 3" more movement (1" movement + 2" attack cost). The fourth soldier in the skirmish line is 4" away. The tyrannosaurus moves into contact, but does not have enough movement left for an overrun. There is, therefore, no closing fire. The soldier can still shoot during the Regular Fire Phase, just as the tyrannosaurus can attack during the Dinosaur Attack Phase.

2. REGULAR FIRE PHASE

Once all dinosaur movement has taken place, and all closing fire and overruns have been resolved, the army side has the opportunity for regular fire. All weapons can be fired in this phase, provided they are within range of and have a line of sight to a dinosaur target. See the Army Weapons table for weapon details; modifiers for attack rolls are on the Army Attack Modifiers table.

Some weapons shown on the Army Weapons table can be fired twice in a turn. These are weapons that do not have to be reloaded each turn or require no special handling.

Such weapons can be fired during the Regular Fire Phase and once more in the course of the turn. The other fire attack can come either during closing fire or in the Secondary Fire Phase (but not both). Some circumstances prohibit firing more than once in a turn (for example, if the soldier is acting as a spotter for artillery fire; see "Indirect Fire").

Example. A stegosaurus tries to overrun a soldier shooting a rifle. The soldier fires during closing fire and hits the stegosaurus, but does not kill it. The stegosaurus rolls too high on its overrun attack, so the soldier survives. During the Regular Fire Phase, the soldier shoots again. The shot hits again, this time killing the stegosaurus.



3. DINOSAUR ATTACK PHASE

Once the army side has had a chance to fire all its weapons, every dinosaur in contact with a soldier or vehicle gets to make an attack. Only one attack per dinosaur can be made during the Dinosaur Attack Phase. There is no movement cost, since normal dinosaur attacks are not considered overruns.

4. ARMY MOVEMENT PHASE

After every dinosaur in contact with a soldier or vehicle has had a chance to attack, all army soldiers and vehicles are allowed to move. The movement rate for

soldiers is 6"; the movement rate for vehicles is 18" (see the Army Vehicles table and the Army Movement Modifiers table).

There is a special movement penalty for moving out of contact with a dinosaur. The penalty for a soldier is 2"; the penalty for a vehicle is 6". Thus, a soldier in contact with a dinosaur can move only 4" that turn; a vehicle in contact with a dinosaur has only 12" of movement left.

5. SECONDARY FIRE PHASE

Finally, after every army soldier and vehicle has had a chance to move, any soldier using a weapon that gets two attacks per turn and has not already fired twice gets a second shot.

Once all secondary fire is over, the turn ends. A new turn begins with a new phase of dinosaur movement.

Example. A triceratops tries to charge a tank. However, after measuring movement, the dinosaur is still 3" away. During the Regular Fire Phase, the tank fires both its cannon and its machine gun. The triceratops survives. The tank backs up 18" during the Army Movement Phase. In the Secondary Fire Phase, the tank's machine gun, but not its cannon, can fire again.

ATTACKS

Attacks are rolled using two six-sided dice (2d6). To succeed, the attack score or lower must be rolled. If the attack score is 8, a roll of 8 or lower indicates a successful attack, while a roll of 9 or higher indicates a failed attack. Attack scores are given in the Dinosaur Statistics table and the Army Weapons table (with modifiers for the latter in the Army Attack Modifiers table).

Several weapons on the Army Weapons table have two values listed, divided by a slash. The first number given is the attack score for direct fire. The second number is the attack score for indirect fire. For example, heavy artillery has an attack value of 9/7. The 9 value would be used if the artillery piece had a direct line of sight to the target dinosaur. The 7 value would be used for indirect fire (for example, if a spotter were calling down fire onto a target the artillery crew couldn't see directly).

Each army soldier uses whatever weapon the playing figure has. In the World War II era, the basic weapon is a rifle. In the modern era, the basic weapon is an assault rifle. In addition, every soldier is considered to have an unlimited amount of hand grenades. In play, few soldiers get to throw more than two before they are eaten, and unlimited grenades reduces bookkeeping for all players.

SPECIAL ARMY FIGURES

The army side can have three kinds of special figures: NCOs, leaders, and heroes (everyone else is a regular enlisted soldier). NCOs are noncommissioned officers: corporals and sergeants. They are often in charge of a fire team, section, or squad. Leaders are commissioned officers, usually lieutenants

and captains. They are the platoon and company commanders. Heroes can be of any rank selected by the army player.

Special figures should be chosen because they stand out from the rest of the figures at a glance. NCOs, leaders, and heroes are considered to always have the standard weapon of their time, along with whatever secondary weapon the figure is actually armed with. Thus, even though the actual figure is firing a pistol, a leader can shoot with a rifle (if from the World War II period) or an assault rifle (if from the modern era). Sometimes NCOs or heroes have weapons that are better than the basic ones (for example, automatic rifles).

Special figures always get a +1 modifier to the attack scores for weapons they use. Thus, an NCO firing a submachine gun would have an attack score of 9 instead of 8.

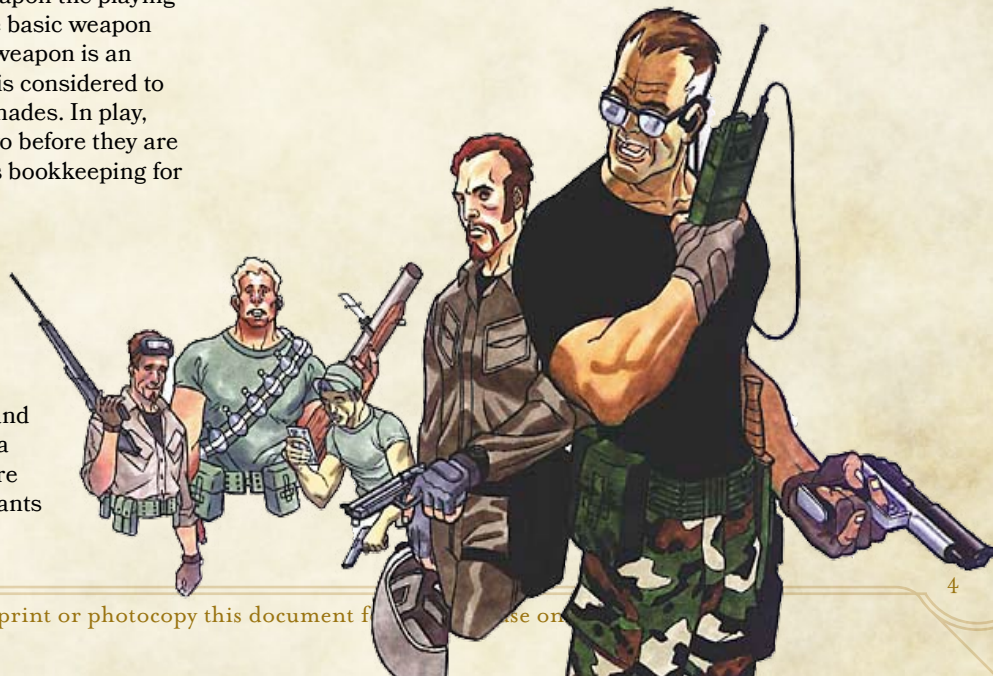
In addition, special figures are allowed to make luck rolls if successfully attacked by dinosaurs (see "Damage"). Successful luck rolls allow these figures to escape death and can also stop overrun attacks.

As a general rule, one out of every ten army figures can be a NCO. For every two NCOs, there can be one leader (usually a lieutenant or captain) and one hero (who could be of any rank). Thus a force of twenty-two soldiers could include eighteen enlisted soldiers, two NCOs, one leader, and one hero.

CREWED WEAPONS

Some large army weapons require a crew in order to be fired effectively. The minimum crew values given on the Army Weapons table are the number of soldier figures that must be designated as crew if this sort of weapon is to continue to fire each turn. If crew members fall below the minimum listed for such a weapon, a single individual can fire that weapon once only. Afterward, the weapon is considered unloaded and cannot be fired until the minimum number of crew spend one turn at the weapon without firing it (they are reloading it).

Weapon crews cannot fire their individual weapons in a turn if their crewed weapon has been or is about to be fired that turn. Thus, the army player has a choice each turn of whether to fire the weapon or all the crew's weapons. The only exception is that a crewed weapon



can never be fired if a dinosaur is in contact with it. The individual crew members must fire instead.

The +1 attack modifier for special figures does not apply to a crewed weapons attack if a special figure is part of a weapons crew. There is thus no advantage to having these figures join a weapons crew.

If a dinosaur attacks a crewed weapon, the dinosaur player has the choice of attacking either the weapon itself or the crew. Any attack that succeeds against a crewed weapon destroys that weapon.

Example. A howitzer crew has been firing at an oncoming allosaurus, which survives and keeps coming. The turn starts with the allosaurus 7" away from the howitzer. The allosaurus moves the 7" and decides to make an overrun attack on one of the crew. That individual alone is allowed to fire a rifle during closing fire, but the shot misses the allosaurus. The overrun succeeds. The allosaurus has plenty of movement left and tries to overrun another crew member. The allosaurus survives another closing-fire attack, but its own attack fails. The allosaurus ends its move in contact with the last three crew members and the howitzer.

During the Regular Fire Phase, the three crew members fire their rifles at the allosaurus. Two hit, but the allosaurus is not killed. The allosaurus then destroys the howitzer with a successful attack. The surviving crew members abandon the howitzer, moving 4" during the Army Movement Phase. Two of the three get secondary fire; the other crew member has no secondary fire after getting to make a closing fire attack.

DAMAGE

If a dinosaur's attack succeeds against a regular enlisted soldier, that soldier is killed. Special army figures have a chance to survive a dinosaur attack. On any successful dinosaur attack, a special figure gets a luck roll, as indicated on the following table.

Special Figure	Luck Roll
NCO	7
Leader	8
Hero	9

If the figure rolls the indicated luck roll or less on 2d6, the figure is only wounded and can continue to fight. (Wounding has no effect unless the optional rule for wounded soldiers is used; see "Optional Rules"). If the roll fails, the figure is killed. A special figure can be killed only by failing to make a luck roll. A hero hit by three dinosaurs must make three separate luck rolls; as long as the figure keeps succeeding on those rolls, the fight goes on. A successful luck roll ends an overrun attack just as if the dinosaur attack had failed.

Damage to dinosaurs and vehicles is different than damage to soldiers. Most dinosaurs and vehicles can take multiple hits. Dinosaurs have life points (LP). Vehicles have structural points (SP). Both concepts function essentially the same.

Dinosaurs and army weapons have damage values given on the Dinosaur Statistics and Army Weapons tables, respectively. For dinosaurs, these damage values are used only when fighting army vehicles. Ignore them when the dinosaur fights individual soldiers.

A dinosaur can continue to fight until it loses all its life points. A vehicle can continue to function until it loses all its structural points. Players must keep track of damage to dinosaurs and vehicles, either on a separate sheet of paper or on scraps of paper placed by the appropriate dinosaur or vehicle.

AUTOMATIC KILL

Certain weapons are so powerful that they have a chance to automatically kill a dinosaur. Likewise, certain dinosaurs have a chance to automatically destroy a vehicle. It takes an especially lucky roll for an automatic kill. Army weapons with an asterisk after their damage value on the Army Weapons table get an automatic kill if the player rolls a 2 on the attack dice.

Dinosaurs are a little more complicated. A dinosaur with a single asterisk after its damage value can destroy any vehicle, except a tank, on an attack roll of 2. Dinosaurs with two asterisks after their damage value can destroy a non-tank vehicle on an attack roll of 2 or 3, and can destroy a tank on an attack roll of 2. (A weapon or a dinosaur with no asterisk after its damage value can still harm a target, but it can't automatically destroy that target with one roll.)

Examples. A platoon armed with rifles faces a brachiosaurus. They must hit the creature with thirty-two successful shots before they can kill the eighty-nine-ton beast. On the other hand, a single hit from a bazooka could kill the dinosaur if the attack roll was a 2. Even if it wasn't a roll of 2, on a successful attack, the bazooka would do 3 LP damage instead of 1.

Likewise, a pterodactyl would have to hit a jeep three times to knock it out of commission. A monoclonus would take out a jeep on a single hit, since it does 3 SP damage, but the dinosaur would have to hit a tank five times to take it out. A triceratops would also have to hit the tank five times to take it out normally, but it could get lucky and destroy the tank with one hit if it rolled a 2.

ARMOR

Armor makes a figure harder to successfully attack in combat. Only dinosaurs have armor (the effects of vehicles' armor have been calculated into their structural points). The dinosaurs' armor value acts as a negative modifier to the attack score of an army attack. Thus, for a soldier attacking an ankylosaurus (armor 2) with a pistol (attack score 7), the attack would penetrate the dinosaur's bony armor only on a roll of 2 to 5.

If a dinosaur's armor value is given as two numbers divided by a slash, the first number applies to frontal attacks and the second applies to rear attacks. A dash means the dinosaur has no armor against a rear attack. Any attack within 180 degrees of the front of the dinosaur figure is considered a frontal attack. If it is uncertain whether the attack is from the front or rear, give the dinosaur the benefit of the doubt.

TRANSPORTATION

The army player might want to transport soldiers in or on vehicles for faster movement. The carrying capacity for different vehicles is given on the Army Vehicles table.

This capacity is a range of numbers, since not all vehicles of the same type are of the same size. Use the minimum values for small vehicles, the average for medium-sized vehicles, and the maximum for the largest vehicles of any particular type. A player can generally gauge by eye what carrying capacity seems reasonable for any vehicle. If difficulties arise, see how many figures can actually fit into or onto the vehicle without falling off.

Carrying capacity does not include the vehicle's crew, which includes the driver and enough soldiers to work any weapons mounted on the vehicle. Crew capacities are given on the Army Vehicles table, but these can vary depending on the type of weapons mounted on the vehicle. Every vehicle has a driver. If the vehicle has a mounted machine gun, there will be one additional crew member (that is, two crew members in total). If the vehicle has a mounted cannon, there will be two additional crew members (three total). If the vehicle has both a machine gun and a cannon, there will be three extra crew members (four total).

A tank usually has a crew of four (a driver, machine gunner, and two cannon operators), usually led by a NCO. If the army side has three tanks, one crew member can be a leader; if it has five tanks, then one crew member can be a hero.

Example. The army player has a half-track that can carry six soldiers. If the half-track had a mounted machine gun, its carrying capacity would be reduced by one. If the half-track had a mounted cannon, its carrying capacity would be reduced by two.

LOADING AND UNLOADING

It takes half a turn's worth of movement to load or unload a vehicle. The penalty applies both to the movement of the soldiers being loaded or unloaded and to the movement of the vehicles that turn. In effect, this means that only soldiers within 3" of a vehicle will be able to load into it, and that the vehicle can move only 9" that turn. Likewise, on the turn in which the vehicle unloads, it can move only 9" and the offloaded soldiers will be able to move only 3".

The penalty for moving out of contact with a dinosaur is calculated before the half-movement penalty for loading or unloading is applied. Thus, a truck (movement 18") in contact with a dinosaur could move only 6" away to unload its passengers ($18 - 6 = 12$, $12 \div 2 = 6$), who would each have another 2" of movement ($6 - 2 = 4$, $4 \div 2 = 2$).

Unless the optional rule for moving fire is being used, troops carried in or on a vehicle will not be able to fire until they are unloaded.

VEHICLE PERSONNEL CASUALTIES

If a vehicle is destroyed, there is a chance that its driver, crew, and passengers are killed. The army player should roll 2d6 for every individual in or on the vehicle at the time it is destroyed. A roll of 7 or less indicates survival; on a roll of 8 or more, the individual is killed. Special army figures are allowed their usual luck rolls if they fail this survival roll.

TOWING AND SETTING UP WEAPONS

A truck, half-track, or tank can tow light artillery or a recoilless rifle. Movement while towing is one-half normal. This movement penalty is cumulative with any other penalties. Thus, a truck towing a recoilless rifle and picking up passengers could move only $4\frac{1}{2}$ " that turn.

It takes a full turn to hitch or unhitch a weapon. After the weapon is unhitched, it will be ready for fire on the next turn. The vehicle can also transport the weapon's crew.

Once placed, heavy artillery remains in place for the duration of the game and cannot be moved. Its facing can be changed, however, without penalty.

The lighter crewed weapons, such as machine guns and mortars, take half a turn's movement to set up or dismantle. The minimum crew number listed is also the minimum number needed to move the weapon. If there is not enough movement left to pay the setup penalty, a weapon cannot be fired. Thus, if a heavy machine gun crew moved 4", they could not then set up their gun and fire in that turn.

RANGES

An army attack can succeed only if the dinosaur is within range of the particular weapon being used. If there is any debate on whether a dinosaur is within range, give the army the benefit of the doubt.

If a weapon has two ranges separated by a slash, the first range is for manual fire, and the second is for fire from a fixed position (a tripod, bipod, vehicle mount, and so forth).

Mortars have a special minimum range, since they are arced-fire weapons whose shells are lobbed at the enemy. A mortar must have at least 18" of range to fire effectively, but will not be able attack beyond 60".

LINE OF SIGHT

A direct-fire weapon has a single attack score and must have line of sight to be able to fire. If a soldier can't see a dinosaur, that dinosaur can't be attacked. Line of sight can be blocked by unusual terrain, vehicles, or other dinosaurs. If there is any disagreement about line of sight, give the army the benefit of the doubt.

INDIRECT FIRE

Weapons that have two attack scores divided by a slash (including mortars and artillery) are allowed indirect fire. Individuals using such weapons can shoot at a target they cannot see as long as some soldier who can see the dinosaur acts as a spotter. Any individual can act as a spotter for indirect artillery fire. It is easiest to assume that all figures and vehicles in the army are in radio contact with each other. A spotter who calls down fire can shoot a personal weapon only once that turn. Remember to use the second (lesser) attack score for indirect fire only; the first score is for direct fire.

THE RAMBO RULE

A hero (and only a hero) can pick up a light machine gun and fire it manually. This is the one instance where this

weapon can be fired without its full crew for more than just one turn. Roll 1d6 to see how many turns' worth of ammunition are already loaded into the light machine gun when the hero picks it up to fire. Use the unfixed range (24") for the weapon.

SCALE

The movement rates and ranges given are for 1:32 (54 mm) scale (1:35 scale is essentially the same). This is the usual scale for toy plastic soldiers, and many rubber dinosaurs and plastic model kits are on the market in that scale. The same scale is appropriate for some "action figure" toys.

A second, equally useful scale is 1:76 or 1:72 — the approximate scale that many plastic dinosaurs come in. Extensive figure and vehicle model lines come in this smaller scale, which would be applicable for human figures as small as 15 mm and as large as 25 mm. If the smaller scale is used, reduce all movement rates and ranges (including any movement penalties) by half. Thus, a tyrannosaurus would move 9" and spend 1" for an overrun.

There is no need to be fanatical about scale. The idea is to have fun without spending a lot of money on figures. Use what you can get. Reasonably faithful scale figures simply look better, such that a tyrannosaurus appears a lot more frightening if it stands four times the height of a soldier. Scales can even be mixed if necessary, using larger soldiers but smaller dinosaurs (since both are often available in cheap plastic bags at toy stores, drug stores, hobby stores, and so forth). Figures of different scales can also be combined. In particular, smaller dinosaurs can be used with larger ones as young dinosaurs, having fewer life points and doing less damage.

The larger scale is best played on a large floor or in a yard. The smaller scale can be played on a large table. If space is a problem, lower the movement rates and ranges accordingly. Dividing these values by three or even four will allow play on an average-sized kitchen table. As long as the proportion is kept the same throughout, the rules will play well.

OPTIONAL RULES

All optional rules have been rated, showing which side they are likely to favor and how strong the change will probably be. Letters are used to denote which side is favored. "A" means the rule favors the army; "D" means the rule favors the dinosaurs; "N" means the rule favors neither side. Rules that favor one side or the other are also rated from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning the rule only slightly favors that particular side, while 5 means the rule highly favors that side. The ratings were included to help players adjust the play balance when deciding which optional rules to use.

Terrain Penalties (D1). A bit of terrain can spruce up any battlefield, be it the kitchen table or the backyard. Model trees, potted plants, Styrofoam hills, gravel from the driveway, vacuform terrain, tree branches—use whatever works.

For simplicity, all terrain except the playing surface (table, floor, or ground) is considered "unusual" and has

a penalty when moved through. The movement penalty is 2" for soldiers and dinosaurs, and 6" for vehicles. The penalty applies if a figure moves through that terrain during any part of the turn. The penalty is paid only once per turn, no matter how many types of unusual terrain are moved through. Thus, a tank moving down a hill, across broken ground, and into the woods still has only a 6" movement penalty.

When calculating movement penalties, always take subtractive penalties first, then calculate divisive penalties. For example, a tank moving out of contact with a dinosaur, over a hill, and unloading passengers could move only 3" that turn ($18 - 6 - 6 = 6$; $6 \div 2 = 3$).

If subtractive penalties reduce a figure's movement to zero, the figure is trying to do too much that turn and must choose between the various options.

Cover (N). Smaller dinosaurs (coelophysis, deinonychus, and so forth) in appropriate terrain (broken, woods, ruins, and such) are considered to have cover, and a -1 is applied to a weapon's attack score for attacks against them. Most dinosaurs are too big for cover to be a factor.

If buildings are being used, soldiers inside a building impose -1 to a dinosaur's attack score only on the first turn any particular dinosaur attacks the building. Thus, the first time a tyrannosaurus attacks soldiers inside a building, it succeeds only on a 9 or less. After the first attack, the tyrannosaurus hits normally. Smaller dinosaurs are considered to have broken into the building, and larger ones to have broken down the building.

Dive Move (D2). Flying dinosaurs gain a special dive move when swooping down on their prey. The move is measured directly on the diagonal instead of using the horizontal-vertical method. It thus shortens movement into an attack. Such a move is really appropriate only when the dinosaur is diving to attack, not when it is climbing for altitude.

Minimum Altitude (A2). Each time a flying dinosaur takes to the air, it must move at least 6" upward. If the dinosaur does not attain at least 6" of altitude, its movement in that turn is limited to half normal.

Dino Rage (D5). A dinosaur does not die when reduced to 0 LP. Instead, like a special army figure, it gets a luck roll. It can then continue to fight on as long as it keeps making a luck roll after every successful attack by the army side. The dinosaur luck roll depends on its attack score, as indicated on the following table.

Attack Score	Luck Roll
8	6
9	7
10	8

Ramming Move (A3). Normally, vehicles attack only with whatever weapons are mounted on them. As an option, allow a vehicle to make a ramming attack against a dinosaur. If the vehicle has enough movement, the ramming attack succeeds on a roll of 10 or less on 2d6. On a roll of 11 or 12, the dinosaur evades the ramming vehicle. Whether the attack succeeds or not, a vehicle that chooses to ram a dinosaur wrecks its suspension and is immobile for the rest of the game.

The army player can still fire the vehicle's weapons, if appropriate.

If the ramming attack succeeds, the vehicle does life point damage equal to its structural points. Thus, a jeep would do 3 LP on a ramming attack, while a tank would do 15 LP.

Moving Fire (A4). Troops carried in or on vehicles do not normally fire until they are offloaded. If this optional rule is used, allow half of the carried troops to fire while the vehicle is in motion (round numbers up). Firing while in or on a vehicle imposes a -2 penalty to a weapon's attack score. Thus, a soldier armed with a rifle would need to roll 5 or less on the attack while in the back of a truck.

High-Caliber Ammo (A1). The Army Weapons table assumes standard ammunition for weapons. Rifles and pistols can come in varieties using high-caliber bullets with more stopping power than standard ammunition. If high-caliber ammunition is used, a weapon's damage is increased to 2 LP but its attack score is lowered by 1. Thus, a .44 magnum revolver would do 2 LP damage and have an attack score of 6.

Snipers (A3). One soldier per ten enlisted soldiers can be designated a sniper. A sniper increases the range of a rifle or assault rifle by 6" and increases the weapon's attack score by 1. A sniper could also be an NCO or hero (but not a leader), increasing the weapon's attack score by a total of 2.

Limited Grenades (D3). In the regular rules, the army player does not keep track of how many grenades each soldier throws. Any soldier who can move into position to throw a grenade can do so. Optionally, each regular soldier carries only one hand grenade, though NCOs, leaders, and heroes still have unlimited supplies of grenades.

Fire into Combat (D4). In the regular rules, soldiers can fire at dinosaurs even if the dinosaur is currently fighting (that is, in contact with) another soldier or a vehicle, without risk of hurting the friendly soldier or vehicle. As an optional rule, if an army figure fires into an ongoing combat, a friendly figure or vehicle might be hit by accident.

If the attack hits the dinosaur, there is no problem. If the attack misses, it might hit the figure or vehicle the dinosaur was fighting. Roll 2d6; on a roll of 10 or higher, the attack hits the friendly figure or vehicle. Roll for each appropriate miss. Multiple damage applies if the target is a vehicle.

Special Forces (A4). The army player can have one small unit consisting entirely of heroes. This elite unit should be no larger than 20 percent of the total army size. The unit represents one of the special forces of the world's armies (Green Berets, SAS, Rangers, Spetsnaz, commandos, paratroopers, and so forth).

Wounded Soldiers (D3). Any special army figure that is hit by a dinosaur but succeeds on a luck roll is wounded. The figure's modification to a weapon's attack score is lost for the rest of the game (including a sniper modification, if applicable). If this rule is used, it will be necessary to keep track of wounded figures in the same way a player keeps track of wounded dinosaurs and damaged vehicles.

Paratroopers (A3). One small unit, no larger than 20 percent of the army, can be designated as paratroopers.

This unit's setup is handled differently than other army units. To simulate a paratroop, the army player makes a paper airplane and launches it from one edge of the playing surface (player's choice of which edge). Within 2" of wherever the paper airplane lands is where the paratroopers set up. If the airplane flies completely beyond the playing surface, allow the player to try again on the next turn, until the plane eventually lands inside the playing surface.

Dino Charge (D2). On the first time a dinosaur attacks (and only then), give it an additional 2" of movement to simulate an enraged charge. This bonus might allow an additional overrun attack.

If all of the optional rules are used, the advantages in point values are equal for both sides.

PLAY BALANCE

The following point system offers a way to balance both sides in the game. First, total up the points for the army. The dinosaur side should have approximately twice as many points as the army in order for the battle to be fair.

A basic army soldier is worth 2 points. An NCO is worth 3 points, a leader is worth 4, and a hero is worth 5. A vehicle's point cost equals its structural points plus additional points for its crew (as per regular soldier values), with an additional 1 point for a mounted machine gun and 2 points for a mounted cannon. Each crewed weapon is worth a number of points equal to one less than the minimum crew size required.

The point cost system allows players to design vehicles and army groups. For simplicity, some average vehicle point costs and crewed weapon modifiers are given below. The first point value is for an unarmed vehicle; the second is for an armed one.

Vehicle	Points
Motorcycle	2/4
Jeep	4/6
Truck	5/7
Half-track	6/10
Armored car	7/11
APC	7/9
Tank	—/22

Each dinosaur has a point cost equal to its life points. A +1 modifier is added if the dinosaur moves faster than 24".

Example. One player controls an army group of twenty-two soldiers, including two NCOs, one leader, and one hero. The group has a heavy machine gun and a mortar. Attached to the group is one tank (with a tank gun and machine gun) plus an unarmed truck. The point size for the group would therefore be 80 points (44 soldier points + 7 point for special figures + 2 points for special weapons + 22 points for the tank + 5 points for the truck).

Battling the army group are two tyrannosaurs (30 points), two triceratops (30 points), an apatosaurus (24 points), two dimetrodons (12 points), two plateosaurs (14 points), two stegosaurus (20 points), three pterodactyls (6 points), and two ankylosaurus (24 points). The dinosaur side totals 160 points.

GAME SETUP

There are two kinds of setup: random and deliberate. In either case, dinosaurs cannot be set up closer than 24" (preferably 36") to any army soldier or vehicle. Two setup examples are given below. "Dino Island" is a random setup. "Time Gate" is a deliberate setup.

DINO ISLAND

The playing area simulates an island. The playing surface is about 200 square feet in size (12 feet by 15 feet will work). Neither side can leave the island at any time. Take twelve chits or scraps of paper, numbered 1 to 12. Distribute them across the playing area in twelve different locations, separated by at least 24" if the chits are placed on the most prominent landmarks or by 36" if spaced evenly in a 3-by-4 grid.

Each side has three players. Each player on the army team has an army group of 50 to 100 points, and each dinosaur player has one-third of the dinosaurs. Setup is random. Using a set of twelve duplicate chits, have each player draw one chit to determine where to set up. The first figure a player places must go on the spot marked. The player's other figures are placed near the first one in any order desired, but no farther than 12" away from the marked spot. Alternatively, a dinosaur player places one figure first, then an army player puts down one figure, and this alternating setup continues until all six players are set up.

The battle is a fight to the death. Once one side has been completely wiped out, the game ends.

Variations. A fourth army player can control all the tanks; the dinosaur total is then divided into four teams too. Point values, playing areas, number of players, and setup spaces can all be varied as well.

TIME GATE

The premise of this scenario is that the army force has become lost in time. The only way back to its own time is through a special gate. The gate sets up a field between two poles, spaced scale inches apart. Unfortunately, the army has only one of the poles. The other is hidden somewhere in dinosaur territory. The army must invade the land of the dinosaurs and search until the second pole is found. The poles can then be set up so the soldiers can go home.

It helps to have a neutral referee to place the second pole in a reasonable spot and oversee hidden movement. Dinosaurs can hide behind unusual terrain and will thus not be spotted until an army player comes within 18" of them. Hidden dinosaurs are not placed until spotted. Both sides can divide their total forces any way they wish (thus the army can form recon squads). The setup area can vary as circumstances dictate, as long as there is ample room for movement. Two soldiers can carry the gate pole, or it can be loaded into a vehicle (it takes up the space of one soldier).

The game ends when the army escapes back to its own time, or when the dinosaurs wipe out all the army figures.

Variation. The army begins the game entirely mechanized. To compensate, add several areas of impassable terrain (deep swamps, high mountains, and so on).

DINOSAUR DESCRIPTIONS

Dinosaurs and the other unusual reptiles used in this game are detailed in the following section, with notes on their sizes, diets, and the geologic period in which they were found. The Permian period lasted from 286 to 248 million years ago, and came just before the three great ages of dinosaurs in the Mesozoic era. The dinosaur ages were the Triassic (248 to 213 million years ago), the Jurassic (213 to 144 million years ago), and the Cretaceous (144 to 65 million years ago).

Allosaurus. 40 feet long, 15 feet tall, 3 tons; carnivore; Jurassic. The most dangerous predator of its time, allosaurus had clawed forelimbs and hind legs for pinning down its prey, and a huge mouth for ripping flesh.

Anatosaurus. 30 feet long, 13 feet tall, 4 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. This was the classic duck-billed dinosaur, so named for its long, low skull that resembles a duck's bill and its webbed, three-toed feet. Similar duckbills grew as large as 43 feet long and 5 tons.

Ankylosaurus. 35 feet long, 6 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. This creature's body was completely protected by a shell-like mass of bony plates. Its tail, ending in a heavy club, could be swung at enemies with fatal results.

Apatosaurus. 70 feet long, 14½ feet at shoulder, 33 tons; herbivore; Jurassic. This monster's prime defenses were its long, whiplike tail and its ability to rear up on its hind legs and bring its great weight crashing down on an enemy.

Brachiosaurus. 75 feet long, 21 feet at shoulder, 89 tons; herbivore; Jurassic. One of the most massive, though not longest, animals ever to walk the Earth, Brachiosaurus had a long neck and served the same ecological function as a giraffe, browsing off treetops.

Ceratopsus. 20 feet long, 8 feet tall, 1 ton; carnivore; Jurassic. This swift, savage carnosaur had a bony ridge above each eye and a hornlike growth above its nose. Fossil footprints suggest it may have hunted in packs.

Coelophysis. 10 feet long, 5½ feet tall, 65 pounds; carnivore; Triassic. This light, agile creature had hollow bones and could run swiftly on its birdlike legs. It may have hunted in packs and been cannibalistic.

Deinonychus. 13 feet long, 7 feet tall, 300 pounds; carnivore; Cretaceous. Deinonychus had a comparatively large brain and probably hunted in packs. Its second toe bore a sickle-shaped claw nearly 6 inches long that could be raised up and back when running.

Deinocheirus. 40 feet long, 20 feet tall; 2 tons; carnivore; Cretaceous. Known only from a pair of 8½-foot-long arms (each ending in claws 8 inches long), this could represent a type of large, fast dinosaur that primarily used its claws instead of its teeth to hunt.

Deinosuchus. 50 feet long, 9 tons; carnivore; Cretaceous. The largest known crocodile, this was not a dinosaur but would have been contemporary with them.

Dimetrodon. 13 feet long, 1 ton; carnivore; Permian. The dimetrodon was not actually a dinosaur, but a reptile that lived some 50 million years before dinosaurs evolved. It is characterized by its spiny sail back, which probably served to control its body temperature.

Diplodocus. 90 feet long, 16 tons; herbivore; Jurassic. With its tremendous snaky neck and long whiplike tail, this dinosaur was among the longest to walk the land.

Dolichosuchus. 18 feet long, 10 feet tall, 350 pounds; carnivore; Triassic. This dinosaur was similar to coelophysids, only larger.

Dryptosaurus. 22 feet long, 8 feet tall, 500 pounds; carnivore; Cretaceous. Dryptosaurus had huge back legs that might have been used to leap upon prey.

Gallimimus. 13 feet long, 7 feet tall, 250 pounds; omnivore; Cretaceous. Gallimimus was the largest known ostrich-like dinosaur.

Hylaeosaurus. 20 feet long, 3 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. Hylaeosaurus was the third dinosaur discovered (1832). It had a series of large, hard, symmetrical plates growing down its head and back, plus protective spikes growing out of its sides and up its tail.

Iguanodon. 30 feet long, 16½' tall, 6 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. The second dinosaur discovered (1822), this bipedal dinosaur was strong and bulky, with curious spiked thumbs.

Megalosaurus. 30 feet long, 12 feet tall, 1½ tons; carnivore; Jurassic and Cretaceous. The first dinosaur discovered (1677) and named (1824), megalosaurus was a typical carnosaur with a bulky neck, large jaws, large hind legs, shorter forelegs, and a long tail.

Monoclonius. 20 feet long, 3 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. Monoclonius had a short, scalloped bone frill. Above each eye was a small horn, and above its snout was an extremely long horn, like that of a rhinoceros.

Pachycephalosaurus. 15 feet long, 8 feet tall, 800 pounds; herbivore; Cretaceous. The classic "bone-headed" dinosaur, this one's brain was encased in a solid dome of bone 10 inches thick. It could have used head-butting as a defense and as a mating ritual.

Paleoscincus. 23 feet long, 4 tons; herbivore, Cretaceous. Paleoscincus had solid armor plates on its back, and spines on its flank and tail.

Parasaurolophus. 33 feet long, 23 feet tall, 5 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. This dinosaur is noted for its crest in the shape of a great tube extending from the back of its skull.

Plateosaurus. 26 feet long, 2 tons; omnivore; Triassic. A mostly bipedal dinosaur that sometimes went on all fours, this was a possible ancestor of the later herbivorous giants like apatosaurus and diplodocus.

Pterodactyl. 13-foot wingspan; 15 pounds; piscivore (fish-eater); Jurassic. This flying reptile was not actually a dinosaur. Elongated arm and hand bones supported its wings.

Pteranodon. 23-foot wingspan, 40 pounds; piscivore; Cretaceous. Another flying reptile that was not actually a dinosaur, pteranodon's elongated crest behind its head probably acted as a stabilizer in flight.

Quetzalcoatlus. 39-foot wingspan, 150 pounds; piscivore; Cretaceous. A flying reptile (not a dinosaur) known from only fragmentary remains, it might have been the largest flying creature of all time.

Saltasaurus. 40 feet long, 8 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. Saltasaurus had thousands of small bony

studs and plates guarding its broad back and sides, but otherwise it looked like a small apatosaurus.

Spinosaurus. 40 feet long, 7 tons; carnivore; Cretaceous. Spinosaurus had a sail on its back that extended up to 5 feet in height.

Stegosaurus. 30 feet long, 4 tons; herbivore; Jurassic. Stegosaurus is noted for the two rows of alternating triangular plates running along its back. Its real defense was its tail spikes. It had an enlargement of the spinal cord above its hind legs that may have acted like a second brain to control the movement of its legs and tail.

Stenonychosaurus. 6½ feet long, 80 pounds; omnivore; Cretaceous. An agile rapid runner roughly the size of a human (though lighter), it had probably the largest brain-to-body ratio of any dinosaur.

Styracosaurus. 18 feet long, 2½ tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. This dinosaur had a short, bony frill endowed with a number of long, backward-pointing spikes. It had a single long horn growing from its nose.

Therizinosaurus. 35 feet long, 18 feet tall, 1½ tons; carnivore; Cretaceous. Known from only a single arm that was more than 8 feet long, this carnosaur had claws nearly 1 foot long. Like Deinocheirus, it could represent a type of fast dinosaur that hunted primarily with its claws instead of its jaws.

Torosaurus. 25 feet long, 6 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. Torosaurus resembled triceratops, but had a much larger frill-crest (reaching almost halfway down its back).

Triceratops. 30 feet long, 9 tons; herbivore; Cretaceous. This fierce-looking dinosaur had a short, solid frill and three horns: two long ones (up to 3 feet long) over its eyes, and one short horn over its snout.

Tyrannosaurus. 50 feet long, 20 feet tall, 8 tons; carnivore; Cretaceous. Tyrannosaurus might have been the most powerful carnivore to ever walk this planet. It had a huge head with dagger-like teeth 6 inches long, massive hind legs, a long tail, and ridiculously short forearms.

CREDITS

Design: Tom Moldvay

Development: Tom Moldvay, Lawrence Schick

Playtesters: Richard E. Barr, Kevin Boardman, Charlene Britton, Dave Bullis, Harvey Carberry, Ryan Cope, Tom Cummings, Eric N. Davis, Jeff Dee, Patrick Dougherty, Keith Evans, Brandon George, Tom Hanlon, Jeff Leason, Erol Otus, Lawrence Schick, Marshall Simpson, Steve Sullivan, Charles Wall, Bill Wilkerson, Bill Willingham

Photography: Larry W. Smith

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Layout and Updating for *Dragon+*: Scott Fitzgerald Gray

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DINOSAUR STATISTICS

Dinosaur	Life Points	Movement	Attack Score	Damage	Armor
Allosaurus	10	18"	10	3*	—
Anatosaurus	10	18"	8	2*	—
Ankylosaurus	12	12"	9	2*	2
Apatosaurus	24	12"	8	2**	—
Brachiosaurus	32	12"	8	2**	—
Ceratosaurus	7	18"	9	2*	—
Coelophysis	1	24"	9	1	—
Deinocoelurus	9	24"	10	1	—
Deinonychus	3	24"	10	1	—
Deinosuchus	15	12"/24" ¹	9	3**	1
Dimetrodon	6	18"	9	2	—
Diplodocus	20	12"	8	2**	—
Dolichosuchus	4	24"	10	2	—
Dryosaurus	6	18"	10	2	—
Gallimimus	3	24"	10	1*	—
Hylaeosaurus	10	12"	9	2*	2
Iguanodon	12	18"	8	2*	—
Megalosaurus	8	18"	10	2*	—
Monoclonius	9	18"	9	3*	1/—
Pachycephalosaurus	5	24"	9	2*	—
Paleoscincus	10	12"	9	2*	2
Parasaurolophus	11	18"	8	2*	—
Plateosaurus	8	18"	8	2	—
Pterodactyl	1	36"	9	1	—
Pteranodon	2	36"	9	1	—
Quetzalcoatlus	3	36"	9	1*	—
Saltasaurus	14	12"	8	2*	1
Spinosaurus	14	18"	10	3*	—
Stegosaurus	11	18"	9	2*	1
Stenonychosaurus	1	24"	10	1	—
Styracosaurus	9	18"	9	3*	1/—
Therizinosaurus	7	24"	10	3*	—
Torosaurus	12	18"	9	3**	1/—
Triceratops	14	18"	9	3**	1/—
Tyrannosaurus	15	18"	10	3**	—

1. Movement rate of 24" across water only.

* Automatically destroys any non-tank vehicle on a 2.

** Destroys any non-tank vehicle on 2-3; destroys a tank on a 2.

DINOSAUR MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

Situation	Modifier
Overrun	-2
Unusual terrain (optional)	-2
Charge (optional)	+2*

* First turn of attacking only



ARMY WEAPONS

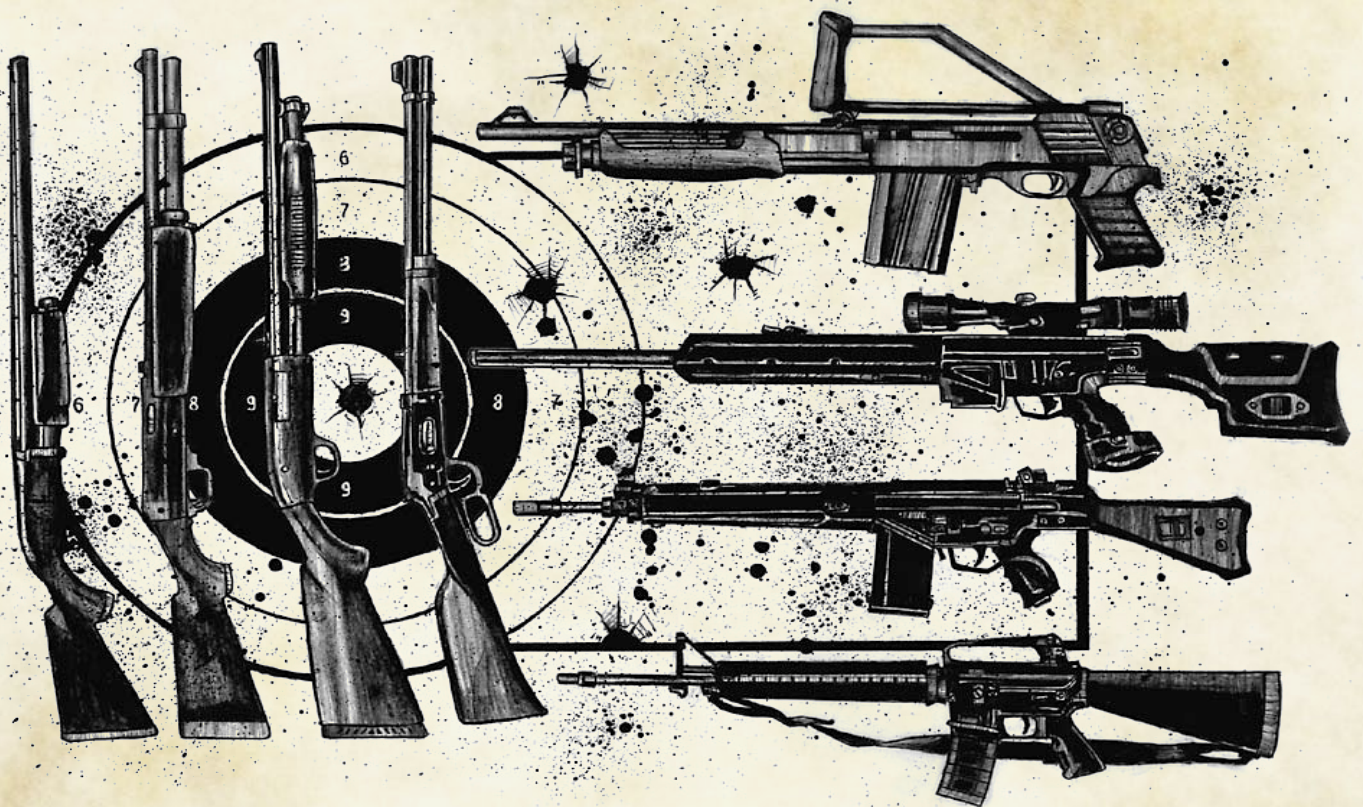
Weapon	Range	Damage	Attack Score	Minimum Crew
Rifle ¹	18"	1	7	—
Assault rifle ¹	12"	2	8	—
Submachine gun ¹	6"	2	8	—
Pistol ¹	6"	1	7	—
Grenade	3"	3*	8	—
Flamethrower	6"	3	6	—
Automatic rifle ¹	18"/24"	2	8	—
Bazooka/rocket	12"	3*	6	—
Light machine gun ¹	24"/36"	2	9	2
Heavy machine gun ¹	48"	2	9	2
Recoilless rifle	24"	3*	7	2
Mortar	18"–60"	3*	7/6	2
Light artillery/tank gun	60"	3*	9/7	3
Heavy artillery	72"	3*	9/7	4

1. Can make two attacks per turn.

* Automatic kill on an attack roll of 2.

ARMY ATTACK MODIFIERS

Modifier	Factor
+1	Hero/leader/NCO
+1	Snipers (optional)
-X	X = any dinosaur armor
-1	Cover (optional)
-1	Higher-caliber ammo (optional)
-2	Moving fire (optional)



ARMY VEHICLES

Vehicle	Structural Points	Carry Capacity	Crew
Motorcycle	1	1	1(2)
Jeep	3	3	1(2)
Truck	4	8	1(2)
Half-track	5	4	1-3
Armored car	6	3	1-3
APC (armored personnel carrier)	6	6	1(2)
Tank	15	4	4

ARMY MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

Condition	Soldiers	Vehicles
Base rate	6"	18"
Escape from dinosaur	-2"	-2"
Load/unload vehicle	× 1/2	× 1/2
Set up/dismantle weapon	× 1/2	—
Towing artillery	—	× 1/2
Unusual terrain (optional)	-2"	-6"

CLAY-O-RAMA

A MINIATURES MELODRAMA FOR ALL AGES

BY DAVID “ZEB” COOK

The Giant Blue Bowling Ball slowly rolled across the battlefield toward the Neon Orange Thing with the big floppy mouth and the writhing mass of tentacles. Desperately, the Neon Orange Thing hurled pellets at the ball as it came relentlessly forward.

Then there was a flash, and a Four-Legged Red Jet plowed into the rear of the Bowling Ball, cracking the ball's surface. The Neon Orange Thing, sensing a kill, closed in. Panicked, the Bowling Ball whipped around, flattening one of the wings of the Red Jet. The Orange Thing lashed out with its tentacles, grasping the ball firmly. With a mighty heave, the Orange Thing hurled the Bowling Ball into the air. It sailed up and hurled down, splitting into pieces as it hit the ground.

Turning from the destruction, the Red Jet grinned as it sighted the Orange Thing. “Feeling lucky today?” it asked—and charged.

Such are the adventures of the denizens of Claydonia as they meet on the battlefield of Clay-O-Rama. Now you, too, can recreate their epic struggles, in the all-new, home-use Clay-O-Rama Miniatures Rules—the same rules used for Clay-O-Rama events at Gen Con!

WHAT IS A CLAY-O-RAMA?

A Clay-O-Rama is many things. It is a chance for friends to meet and have a good time. It can be a serious philosophical discussion on the meaning of modeling clay. It is a means of artistic expression. It is a ritualistic gathering of Claydonians to watch the violent destruction of others of their species. But, most of all, it is a silly game involving modeling-clay miniatures.

WHAT DO I NEED TO HAVE A CLAY-O-RAMA?

First, you need a group of people willing to be silly and have fun playing with modeling clay. Next, you need these rules or something like them. Then you need pencils, paper, and numerous six-sided dice (d6) for each player. Finally, you need one can of modeling clay for each player. Utterly unscientific testing has shown that Play-Doh modeling compound is well suited for use in a Clay-O-Rama. It is easily shaped, comes packaged in the proper amounts, and has pleasing, brilliant colors.

CREATING A CLAYDONIAN

After you have assembled the items listed above, find a large, smooth space on which to play. This could be several tables pushed together or a smooth tile floor. Do not play in a place where you do not want to have bits of modeling clay about. After you have found a place to play and have assembled your friends, give each one a can of modeling clay. Try to let each player have the color he or she wants. After giving out the clay, tell the players the following:

“You have twenty minutes in which to make a creature out of your modeling clay. You can create anything you want, so long as it does not collapse at the slightest touch. You do not have to use all of your clay; any clay you do not use may be shaped into missiles of any size and shape you want. You may not trade clay with another player; use your own clay. When you have finished making your Claydonian, let me know.”

After telling your players this, let them go to it. Do not tell them any more about what will happen except that it will be a miniatures game. Encourage creativity. As each player finishes his or her creation, you must assign the creation its powers.



ASSIGNING POWERS

There are six categories of powers that must be assigned to each Claydonian: movement, number of attacks, “to hit” number, damage, hit points, and special powers. Each one requires that you make a judgment about the creation of the player. The following are guidelines for assigning powers; you may alter them as you see fit.

MOVEMENT

All movement is measured in spans of the player’s outstretched hand (from tip of thumb to tip of little finger). The following table gives the basic movement rates.

Number of legs	Movement
0	1 span
1–2	2 spans
3–4	3 spans
5 or more	4 spans

Note that a “leg” is any type of movement-producing appendage the Claydonian might have, even if it is a wheel.

NUMBER OF ATTACKS

Look at the creation carefully. How many limbs can it use for attacking? This is the number of attacks it can make each turn. However, this number should never be more than four.

CHANCE TO HIT

A Claydonian’s basic chance to hit is 8 or greater on two six-sided dice (2d6). If the creature has big limbs or a big mouth, the roll to hit takes a –1 penalty. If the creature has really big limbs or a really big mouth, or if it uses its entire body in an attack, the penalty is –2. (Large limbs and mouths deal more damage, but are harder to aim with. Chalk it up to the physiology of claw.) You decide just how big is “big” or “really big.”

DAMAGE

The base damage done in any attack is 1d6. If the limbs are large, another 1d6 or 2d6 can be added to this. If the limbs are very large, 3d6 can be added. If the attack is an absolute killer, up to 5d6 can be added to the base attack die. As usual, you decide all final attack values. If you’re getting the idea that this is not a very exact game, you have the right idea. You’re playing with clay monsters, right? Who needs to be exact?

HIT POINTS

Look at the creature and compare it to the amount of clay kept aside to use for missiles. Then assign hit points based on the fraction of clay used to form missiles. If the entire can of clay was used to form the creature, it has 50 hit points. If half was used for missiles, the creature will have 25 hit points. If 25 percent of the clay is used for missiles, knock 25 percent off of 50 to find the creature’s hit points. This is another judgment call on your part as the referee.

SPECIAL POWERS

Each creation gets one special power. It can be chosen from the list below, or you can create any other powers you can think of. If you make them up, it is recommended that you create powers that will affect modeling clay in some harmless way. Be sure that none of them are dangerous to the players or any spectators watching the game.

The following powers can be assigned randomly by rolling a die, or they can be chosen by you to match the creature in some way.

The Drop. Made in place of one normal attack. If a hit is successfully made, the player lifts the target into the air and drops it 3 feet. Afterward, you can decide the amount of damage caused based on what happened.

The Bowl. This power works like the drop, except that the player rolls the target across the battlefield.

The Poke. When a hit is made, the player pokes the target hard with a finger, making a nice hole in it. Then you decide the amount of damage.

Reshape One Limb. This power is used in place of a normal attack. If it hits successfully, the attacking player can alter the shape of any one limb of the target as desired. As referee, you should be ready to assign damage or altered powers because of this change.

The Blob of Death. This power can be used only by a creature with missiles. The player designates one missile to be a Blob of Death. It is fired like a normal missile (see “How Does a Claydonian Shoot?”). If it scores a hit, a player uses a fist to give the target one solid smash to show the effects of the missile. After doing this, assign damage based on the consequences. Only one Blob of Death per game is allowed.

Rip Limbs Off. When a creature rolls an 11 or 12 on a normal attack, its player can tear off one of the opponent’s limbs. Ah, that is, the player can tear off one of the Claydonian opponent’s limbs. Though this attack causes no damage to the target in terms of lost hit points, you should be ready to note any changes to the target’s powers.

Change Places. In addition to a normal attack on a successful hit, creatures with this power can change places with any opponent on the board, or can swap the places of any two other creatures on the board. The creature cannot move in the same turn it uses this power.

Move Out of Turn. Creatures with this power can move at any initiative point in the turn. They simply announce that they wish to move. They cannot move in the middle of another player’s turn.

Use Opponent as Missile. If all of an attacker’s limb’s hit a target, the attacker can pick the target up and use it as a missile against a third opponent. The missile is fired normally, and you as referee should assess damage to both the missile and the target.

Divide Self. This power should only be given to creatures that can easily divide into two sections. Each new creature has half the powers of the normal creature at the time of division.

Borrow Power. In addition to all normal attacks, a successful hit by this creature allows it to use the special power belonging to the creature it hit, if the attacker wants to do so. The decision must be made

immediately or the borrowed power will be lost until another successful hit is made. The player with this power should not be told what the powers of other creatures are. That knowledge can be learned only by observation.

PLAYING THE GAME

Once all the players have created their Claydonians and have had powers assigned to them, have them gather around the playing area. Players should space themselves at equal distances from each other. Each player should then roll 3d6 to determine an initiative number. Ties should be rolled off. Be sure all players note their initiative numbers. After this is done, explain the following rules to the players. Once everyone understands what is going on, begin the game.

TAKING A TURN

The Clay-O-Rama is played in turns. A player gets to move a creation once during each turn. At several points during a turn, a player might have the opportunity to attack. Each player takes a turn in the order of the initiative rolls, going from highest to lowest. The sequence of a player's turn is as follows:

1. Move the player's Claydonian up to its full movement.
2. Fire up to three missiles at targets of the player's choice.
3. Attack any creature to which the player's Claydonian is adjacent, provided the creature has attacks left to do so.
4. Other players can counterattack against the player's creature, provided they have any attacks left.

Each player follows this sequence, in order of initiative, until the player is out of the game or the game is over.

HOW DOES A CLAYDONIAN MOVE?

To move a creature, a player uses his or her hand to measure the distance the Claydonian moves, starting from the front of the creature. If the creature has no discernible front, the player begins measuring in the direction it last moved. There is no terrain in the game (though it can be added if the players desire it). Thus, except when turning, a creature will always be able to move up to its full movement.

(If some people feel that the hand-span measuring system is unfair or grossly inaccurate, you as referee can enforce the Uniformity Rule. The Uniformity Rule states that all distances will be measured by the referee's hand. However, this slows down the play of the game and places a great deal of work in the hands of the referee. Ahem.)

If a part of a creation comes off during movement, the player is allowed to put that piece back on at no penalty. Falling apart is best done under combat conditions.

HOW DOES A CLAYDONIAN SHOOT?

At the end of a creature's movement, the player is allowed to shoot up to three of its missiles. A missile can be used only once. After it is fired, it is removed



from play. If a Claydonian does not have any missiles, the player cannot fire any.

To fire a missile, a player stands anywhere within 3 to 4 feet of his or her own position at the table. The player cannot move to a different area of the battlefield; missiles must be fired relative to the point where the player's creation began the game. After the player has chosen a position, he or she names the target (a specific Claydonian creation on the table). Players cannot attack a group of monsters; only one will do.

Have the player throw the missile, attempting to hit the target. Make it clear to the thrower that how hard the missile is thrown has no effect on the amount of damage done. It is only the size of the missile that matters. It is a wise idea to have someone stand directly opposite the thrower to catch long shots and bounces.

If the thrower manages to hit the declared target, the missile has hit. If the thrower hits a different creature, the shot is a miss, no matter what happens. The player of the attacked Claydonian is allowed to reattach any parts of the creature that come off due to the missile's hits, unless a special power dictates otherwise. If the missile missed, the shot is no good.

If a missile hits its target, you must determine the amount of damage done by the missile. The base damage for a missile is 1d6 for something about the size of a marble. Missiles smaller than this might do less damage. Missiles larger than this should do proportionately greater damage (up to 5d6).

HOW DOES A CLAYDONIAN ATTACK?

Each Claydonian is assigned a number of attacks it can make in 1 turn, based upon the number of manipulative limbs it has. These attacks can be used as attacks or counterattacks. If a creation has used all its attacks, it cannot make any more attacks (or counterattacks) for the rest of the turn.

If a player's creation is adjacent to an enemy creation, the player can decide to attack. "Adjacent" is defined as being within the reach of a Claydonian's arms. A Claydonian can attack as many times as it has attacks, provided it has not used any of its attacks to make counterattacks (see below).

To make an attack, the player announces the target of the attack and the dice of damage done by the attack, then rolls 2d6. If the dice roll is equal to or greater than the Claydonian's "to hit" number, the target has been hit by that attack.

After all attacks have been resolved against one target, the player counts the number of dice of damage from all those successful attacks. Roll the dice and add them together to find the total amount of damage dealt. The player whose creature was the target of the attack should subtract this amount from the target creation's hit points. If the creation's hit points reach zero, the creation is dead (see below on what happens then).

HOW DOES A CLAYDONIAN COUNTERATTACK?

A Claydonian can counterattack if it is attacked by another creation during the combat phase. To counterattack, the Claydonian must have attacks left and must survive the attacks of its opponent. It can make attacks only against the creation that just attacked it. The counterattacks are handled as if they were normal attacks. A Claydonian can use its special power in a counterattack.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CLAYDONIAN DIES?

Ah, this particular question has plagued the Claydonian philosophers for centuries. Several scurrilous theories have been presented, including the concepts of drying out or being eaten by small children and dogs. However, in watching the deaths of several Claydonians on the field of battle, a common belief has arisen. Most Claydonians feel that when one of their kind dies, a large hand reaches from the heavens and squeezes the Claydonian through its fingers. This act is almost always accompanied by a horrible scream that echoes through the heavens.

WHO WINS?

That depends on why everyone is playing this game in the first place. If you are all playing to have fun, everyone wins if they get really silly. If the players are playing to be competitive and to beat out everyone else, the winner is the player of the last surviving Claydonian on the battlefield. Since only one person can win the second way, it's a lot nicer to play for the first reason.

These are the rules for the Clay-O-Rama. Take them, have fun with them, be inspired to the heights of silliness, or feed them to your dog. Enjoy!

CLAYDONIA CONQUERS THE WORLD

MORE RULES, POWER, TABLES, AND TRIVIA FOR CLAY-O-RAMA FANS

By Paul C. Easton

All is quiet on the battlefield as the two opponents take their places. Smoof, the gourd-shaped clay thing, looks malevolently at its opponent, the four-armed, six-legged, multicolored monster called "Creepy" even by its mother. Creepy is the reigning Clay-O-Rama champion, having beaten fifteen foes and eaten ten of them. Smoof is its next meal . . . err, opponent.

Creepy suddenly moves forward and shoots three square orange things at Smoof; two of them hit. The angry Smoof propels itself at the monster, but Creepy bites Smoof twice. Wounded, Smoof teleports to the opposite side of the game area. Creepy lets out an evil laugh and teleports next to Smoof. "Too bad, sucker!" hisses Creepy as it kills Smoof and proceeds to add the fallen foe to its own body. Sated, Creepy shouts in triumph—only to be destroyed by an angry art teacher.

When I first read about the world of Clay-O-Rama in *Dragon* 125, I immediately went out and bought half a dozen cans of Play-Doh modeling compound. Some demented friends of mine came over, and we threw colored clay at one another. I was immediately hooked. I loved this new pastime, but felt that something was missing from the game. After eating a cheesecake, drinking two liters of Cherry 7-Up, and watching Sesame Street reruns, I came to the following conclusions. One, there is no black Play-Doh compound; and two, being a lover of the AD&D game, I was disappointed to find that the Clay-O-Rama rules offered no way to advance your Claydonians or conduct ongoing campaigns.

Consequently, I was motivated to write additional rules for the game, for my friends and my own personal use. Everything was great, except for the additional amount of clay stuck in my hair, and the fact that my favorite Claydonian was baked to a crisp by someone who failed to see the humor in my using three-inch steelies as Claydonian ammo. As the days went on, I added more powers to the list. This is how my Claydonian saga began.

CAMPAIGN RULES

Players who win Clay-O-Rama game sessions might wish to keep their Claydonians and use them in future game sessions. A long-lived Claydonian deserves some reward for surviving these silly battles. The campaign rules additions are explained as follows.

EXPERIENCE LEVEL

This is just a power ranking created to satisfy a Claydonian's ego. The "Claydonian Level Advancement" table provides level numbers, level titles, and additional benefits. The level number corresponds to the number of powers a Claydonian has. All Claydonians begin at first level with one power. As they defeat enemies (that is, anyone they can flatten), they rise in level and gain more hit points. Those hit points are cumulative (unlike powers); thus, by 5th level, a Claydonian would have 65 hit points added to its original score. By 6th level, the Claydonian has become too powerful to be fun and it ceases to enjoy life, thus dying of old age (or drying out, whichever comes first). Of course, in your campaign Claydonians might be immortal. I'll leave it up to you, but I wouldn't worry about it anyway. I've never had a Claydonian live to see 3rd level, much less 6th.

CLAYDONIAN LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Number of Enemies Destroyed or Defeated	Experience Level	Title	Benefits
0–5	1st	Silly Thing	1 power
6–15	2nd	Weirdo	2 powers, +5 hit points
16–30	3rd	Freak	3 powers, + 10 hit points
31–50	4th	Kook	4 powers, +20 hit points
51–80	5th	Blob Monster	5 powers, + 30 hit points
81+	6th	Supreme Slime	Claydonian dies of old age

TAKING THE SAME POWER TWICE

If a player opts to take the same power twice, the effects of that power are doubled. For example, if a Claydonian takes Regeneration twice, it regains 2d6 instead of 1d6 hit points each turn. A Claydonian with Absorb Opponent taken twice cuts the "to hit" number it needs by half (round fractions up) when applying this power. Claydonians can also triple their powers, but this might make such Claydonians unfair opponents when certain powers are thrice increased.

REGAINING LOST HIT POINTS

During a game session, a Claydonian cannot regain lost hit points without the power of Regeneration. At the end of the game, however, the surviving Claydonian (or Claydonians, if you're playing in teams) regains all lost hit points, and all sustained damage is repaired. Surviving Claydonians also regain all lost missiles

at the end of the game, and can take all of the losers' missiles too.

RESHAPING

At the end of a game session, a Claydonian can be reshaped, with the following restrictions:

1. No new missiles can be made.
2. Missiles cannot be added to body mass.
3. The number of limbs used for attacking cannot exceed four.
4. The Claydonian's powers may not be changed.

DEATH

When a Claydonian reaches 6th level or is defeated (that is, killed), it is "recycled" by the gods. If a Claydonian dries up, it is dead. Favored Claydonians should be lovingly zip-locked in a damp bag, kept cool, and guarded carefully. Enemies have been known to microwave their opponents for revenge; in extreme cases, angry opponents have been known to use various torture machines, such as the Play-Doh barber shop and the Play-Doh fire engine. If consumed by a dog or small child (Play-Doh is nontoxic), a Claydonian is considered dead. Note that dried Claydonians may sometimes be revived by adding water, if rescued in time.

"NO REFEREE" RULES

To eliminate a referee from the gaming environment, Clay-O-Rama players can lock him or her out of the room. There is, however, an easier way: Simply have everyone play a Claydonian. For games with many players, whenever a decision must be made regarding a dispute between two players, the players not involved in the dispute make the final decision. Another system is to have a referee who plays and referees at the same time. This referee makes all decisions on damage and such except when his or her Claydonian is involved. (Players not involved in the disagreement make the decision in this instance.) In a two-player game, problems are resolved by smacking the other player's Claydonian before the other player can get to yours.

SILLY PUTTY

This is a new type of material for creating Claydonians. No one knows for certain where this strange material came from. Some say it is a gift left by an extraterrestrial intelligence, and some say it came from over the rainbow. I say it's radioactive jelly. One thing is for sure: Silly Putty makes nifty Claydonians, and adds a new dimension to Clay-O-Rama battles.

Although it doesn't come in the pretty colors that Play-Doh compound does, with Silly Putty, you can put the face of your favorite cartoon character on your Claydonian. But don't let your fun turn into a political argument, as once happened when a player put Ronald Reagan on a Silly Putty creature and said that it couldn't be defeated because it was President. (The problem was settled when someone threw Putty Reagan down the garbage disposal.) You should note, however, that Silly Putty doesn't mix well with clay or Play-Doh compound. As a result, clay characters with the Absorb Opponent or Absorb Missile powers might have trouble absorbing Silly Putty.

A STICKY SITUATION

What do you do if a missile or other object sticks onto a Claydonian? Well, you pry it off, of course. Note, however, that the Claydonian then takes damage amounting to half the total caused by the object. For example, if a missile hits a Claydonian for 4 hit points of damage and sticks, the Claydonian takes an additional 2 hit points of damage while taking it off. If two Claydonians get stuck together, they each take 1d6 hit points of damage when separating from each other. In all instances, round damage down to the nearest integer.

HONORING A CLAYDONIAN DEATH

Another advantage of clay characters is that when they die, you just dry them out and—voila!—you have a nice statue to use as a memorial, centerpiece, or clay pigeon.

POWER, POWER, AND MORE POWER

The following list of powers has been created to add more red peppers to the spice of the game. These additional rules are intended to get you started. Feel free to change them as you deem necessary. As a final note, there is nothing to stop you from making up your own powers; play with the rules that work best for you.

Missile Absorption.

When hit by a missile, a Claydonian with this power rolls 2d6 and compares the result to its own “to hit” number. If the result is over the “to hit” number, the Claydonian takes no damage from the missile and can add the projectile to its body mass. For each missile smaller than marble-sized absorbed, add 1 hit point to the Claydonian. Add 2 hit points for each marble-sized missile absorbed, 3 hit points for any missile up to golf ball-sized absorbed, and 4 hit points for anything over golf ball-sized. This power does not allow a Claydonian to absorb the following: an opponent, a poke, a Blob of Death, or any object larger than fist-sized. In addition, absorbed missiles cannot be used to create other missiles—they just add to the bulk of a Claydonian.

If the Claydonian does not make its “to hit” roll, it takes half damage (round fractions down) from the missile and does not absorb it. A Claydonian cannot absorb missiles that it throws at itself, and it takes full damage from a missile if it does so.

Absorb Opponent. This power gives a Claydonian the ability to absorb any other Claydonian it kills. When a Claydonian with this power kills an opponent, it makes

a “to hit” roll. If successful, the Claydonian adds the dead opponent to its body bulk, adding the number of hit points that the old opponent had to its own. If unsuccessful, the dead Claydonian goes screaming up to the Great Hand in the Sky.

Regenerate. A Claydonian with this ability regenerates 1d6 hit points of damage per turn. This ability allows the Claydonian to replace lost hit points only; it does not create new ones.

Drain Power. A Claydonian with this power can drain one power from another Claydonian for 6 turns. Using this power takes the place of three attacks. To drain a power, the player must choose an opponent adjacent to his or her own Claydonian and make a successful “to hit” roll. If unsuccessful, the power is wasted. This power can be used once every 5 turns.

Create Limb. A Claydonian with this power can create a temporary limb. This temporary limb replaces one normal attack for a small to normal-sized limb; two normal attacks for a large limb; or (how could you guess?) three normal attacks for a limb of very large size. This temporary limb lasts for 4 turns, and it hits and deals damage according to its size. So if your Claydonian already has four limbs, it could have five normal attacks per turn by adding a temporary limb!

Repel. This power can be used by a desperate Claydonian in place of all attacks. No “to hit” roll is needed, and the results are immediate. When this power is used, all opponents must move their maximum movement ranges away from the user for 1 turn.

Moreover, the powers Teleport, Change Places, and Move Out of Turn cannot be used by opponents for 1 turn. In addition, the

Claydonian using this power cannot be hit by missiles for 1 turn.

This power can be used every third turn.

Endurance. The Claydonian with this power takes only half damage from all attacks. Round all fractions down.

Stomp. This deadly attack can be used only once in a gaming session. In addition, the Claydonian using this power is unable to take any action for 2 turns thereafter. The attacker chooses an adjacent opponent and rolls to hit. If a successful hit is made, the player takes off a shoe (or a boot, if the player is lucky enough) and gives the opponent a good solid WHACK! with it. Damage should be determined by the amount of the opponent flattened (for example, if half of the Claydonian is flattened, it loses half of its hit points). Totally flattened Claydonians are left with only 1 hit point.



More than one Claydonian can be affected by this mode of attack, including the attacking Claydonian. If the attacker somehow misses, it still suffers the exhaustive effects of the blow. Smart players wear mountain boots, moon boots, or track shoes for this attack. Snowshoes or skis are not allowed.

Toss. A Claydonian with the Toss ability can use this power in place of all attacks. The attacker chooses an adjacent Claydonian and rolls the “to hit” dice. If successful, the player picks up the opponent’s Claydonian and tosses it no farther than the edge of the gaming area. If the opponent is tossed off or out of the gaming area, it can reshape itself, regain all lost hit points, and reappear in the gaming area anywhere it chooses (except on another Claydonian).

The number of hit points lost when the target Claydonian strikes the play area again must be determined by the referee or by players not involved in the attack. This number depends on the amount of structural damage sustained (about 10 to 20 hit points is usually appropriate). Tossing an opponent at the ceiling is legal as long as the opponent lands in the game area. If the opponent is tossed against the ceiling, then hits the game surface, 20 to 30 hit points of damage are taken. If the opponent sticks to the ceiling, the Claydonian is out of the game until it falls. If it never falls and dries up instead, consider it dead. As a final note on this attack, if a tossed Claydonian hits another Claydonian, only the tossed Claydonian takes damage.

Catch. When something is thrown at a Claydonian with this power, the Claydonian makes a “to hit” roll. If successful, the Claydonian catches the item thrown at it. If the item happens to be a missile, the Claydonian catching it can reuse the missile. If the thrown object is another Claydonian, the target Claydonian catches it and takes no damage. If the Claydonian is unsuccessful in its “to hit” roll, it takes full damage.

Teleport. A Claydonian can use this power in place of all its missile attacks. The Claydonian with this ability can reappear anywhere on the game surface and, if possible, attack right away. To teleport, the player must specify a vacant spot on the game surface for his or her Claydonian to occupy. The player then rolls the “to hit” dice, teleporting to the chosen location on a successful roll. If unsuccessful, the player instead must roll 1d6 twice. The first die roll determines a random direction in which the Claydonian teleports (see the table below). The second die roll determines the distance (in number of hand-spans) that the Claydonian moves.

1d6	Direction
1-2	North
3	West
4-5	South
6	East

Use Self as Missile. This power allows a player to throw his or her Claydonian in the same way one would throw a missile. The referee or players not involved in the attack assess the damage taken by both the missile and the target.

Trade. In a desperate situation, a Claydonian with this power can choose an opponent in an adjacent area and

make a “to hit” roll. If successful, the player trades his or her Claydonian for the target Claydonian. This power can only be used once per game, in place of all attacks for that turn. The player plays the new Claydonian with its shape, hit points, attacks, and movement, but retains the original Claydonian’s powers. Likewise, the other player retains his or her original Claydonian’s powers, but is now stuck with the body of the first player’s Claydonian.

Speed. A Claydonian with this power can double its movement for 1 turn in place of an attack.

Paralyze. On a successful “to hit” roll, a Claydonian can cause an adjacent opponent to stop moving and attacking for two rounds. This attack takes the place of all normal attacks. The paralyzed Claydonian cannot initiate any action for two rounds. This power can be used every 3 turns.

Layout and Updating for *Dragon+*: Scott Fitzgerald Gray

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Neverwinter: Tomb of Annihilation

Thomas Foss talks James Pickard through the free-to-play MMORPG's most challenging and ambitious campaign module so far.

Ask any Dungeons & Dragons player what they know about the classic *Tomb of Horrors* module and the answer you're most likely to get is that it's notoriously difficult. It's an adventure for expert players who are looking for the greatest challenges a D&D campaign can offer. It's also so insidiously constructed as to be a journey you're not meant to survive, at least not without dire consequences if you fall foul of its numerous traps.

As Wizards of the Coast prepares to deliver *Tomb of Annihilation*, a new campaign following on from that infamous adventure, it's only fitting that the *Neverwinter*

MMORPG also sends its players on a trip to the jungle regions of Chult that they might not survive. And when we say *might*, Thomas Foss, *Neverwinter*'s lead designer, is a little blunter when it comes to the threat level.



Thomas Foss

“As soon as players walk into the dungeon, in the very first room, the first thing they touch, they just die...”

Foss laughs and leaves a few moments of silence. The quiet pause lasts long enough for us to believe he's telling the truth. Wait, is he actually being serious? “No! I'm kidding!” he jumps back in to clarify.

Despite the joke, you wouldn't put it past that being the opening to what should be a devilishly difficult addition to *Neverwinter*. *Tomb of Annihilation* will be stacked with deadly tricks designed to wrong-foot players when it launches for the tabletop roleplaying game on September 19, 2017, so why should a digital version in the free-to-play MMORPG (now available for PC; coming to consoles on September 12) be any less devious? After all, it offers the same grand adventure in a place where every element is out to get you: from the creatures and the treacherous jungle to the tomb itself. For Foss and the team, that was their jumping off point.



(Select to view)

“It’s *Indiana Jones* meets *King Kong* meets *Dungeons & Dragons*, right? The first thing we did is surround ourselves with those kind of inspirations. The whole team was watching these movies and passing books back and forth.

“Plus, we pulled out the original *Tomb of Horrors* module. We had that just sitting out to remind us of the gravitas of where this is coming from. What are the fun points of that? Really it’s about exploration and finding the treasure. It’s all about traps and tricks and puzzles. Those are the bullet-point notes that we took when we started designing the Soshenstar Valley, Port Nyanzaru and Chult in general.”

Jungle Setting

The staff at Cryptic Studios were excited to delve into the creation of Chult. Not only building up the dense jungle, sweeping rivers and pockets of ancient ruins, but also plotting out the story they wanted to tell and the iconic characters they wanted to bring along for the ride (expect to team up with old friends Minsc, Boo and Celeste). The death curse that sits at the heart of *Tomb of Annihilation* was the obvious pull to draw players into the region, as was the inclusion of the demi-lich Acererak as an antagonist and his Tomb of The Nine Gods. There was just one problem: Cryptic had never created anything like this before.



(Select to view)

“We were like, yes, we totally want to do this. But at that point we had one potted plant that looked a bit jungle-y in the entire setup of our game. So way back when we broke ground for River District, which was one and a half modules ago, we dedicated a certain part of our art team to building assets for Chult, including jungle, temple, and tomb assets. We built the temple ruins, interiors, and a whole new dungeon kit for the Tomb of the Nine Gods,” Foss explains.

The project was a huge undertaking, yet it captured the team’s enthusiasm so severely that the ideas kept flowing. There were ambitious plans to task players with finding and hiring a guide, who would lead them through the enclosed jungle, teach them to swing across gullies from vines, or aid them in plotting a course through the piranha-infested waters of the Soshenstar River.

While many ideas had to be left behind, Foss and the team have crammed as much as they can into Chult. “You open up in these areas where you’ll find ruined temples, or a Batiri camp, or Camp Vengeance where the Paladins are trying to defend against the undead hordes,” Foss describes.



(Select to view)

Players will find famed explorer Volothamp Geddarm there, too, as he's penning a new book and wants you to go out hunting the jungle's most fearsome creatures: "All the way up to the King of Spines, which is the biggest and scariest T-Rex we've got," Foss enthuses. "It's deadly, but hopefully fun! And, of course, any good opening to an adventure has a cool chase scene in it."

Any Port in a Storm

In spite of all the danger, there is still a place of sanctuary within the dense trees and crumbling ruins: Port Nyanzaru. Foss describes Chult's harbor as, "an exotic city, which the high-end players can use as their new hub. It has most of the conveniences that Protector's Enclave does, but not quite everything." Considering all that surrounds it, surely you wouldn't want to live there anyway?

"There's so many stories to tell in Chult with so many cool characters, so many exotic creatures and monsters. The hard part isn't finding something, it's paring it down, figuring out what you can do and then scoping that within the time you have to build and tell your story."

With all this potential for additional material, is there a chance players will be exploring more of Chult eventually? "Oh, I'm sure I couldn't tell you that," Foss teases.

However, the main attraction right now—if that’s the appropriate term for it—is the Tomb of the Nine Gods. Foss describes Acererak’s new lair as “a big clockwork maze, or a living mechanism.” Entirely new tools had to be created to realize the head-twisting design of Cryptic’s vision. “The dungeon should feel like it just goes on forever because the *Tomb of Annihilation* really does. It’s just level upon level upon level of dungeon.”



(Select to view)

While the instant-death device was scrapped, many other traps and puzzles have made it into the Tomb of the Nine Gods.

“There are a minimum of three traps and puzzles you have to go through each time you enter the dungeon. These will randomize, and they will have a risk/reward to them. It’s not like one person can do it while all the others stand back. All the party need to help, it’s really a team effort.

“If you try to get past the puzzle you will spring traps and have to do something alternative. It’s always best to try and solve the puzzle because you’ll get rewards at the end. It’s actually quicker to solve the puzzle than it is to set off the trap. There’s a risk there, but you always want to try and do it the right way. We worked on this a lot.”

It was important for Foss that the same design ethos stretches to the dungeon’s encounters, too. Players will have to work together to not only fulfill their expected role within the group, but also manage a

number of other factors in fights.

“It’s almost like a disco,” Foss says bizarrely of one boss fight. “He’s in the middle like a DJ in the booth and he’s controlling all these powers and gasses and electrical storms. You’re trying to shut down his batteries—these poor, slave dwarves he’s using as his power source—before he can get them going. Otherwise, there’ll be these combinations where he can get the gas and electricity going and the whole room will explode.”



(Select to view)

Poison gas? Lightning storms? Slave dwarves? It sounds like the worst rave in history, but that mix of mechanics should make for an involving boss fight. And Foss promises that making mistakes in these encounters, or in any section of the dungeon, can be deadly. You will feel the impact of every misstep, and there will only be a small amount of room for recovery.

“The creatures are deadly, the dinosaurs will swarm you, and we encourage you to never go out there alone unless you’re super high-gearred. Even then you’ll want to take a partner,” Foss summarizes perfectly. “In Chult, the monsters are hunting you.”

The PC version of *Tomb of Annihilation* is available now for the free-to-play *Neverwinter* MMORPG. It will be released for the PlayStation 4 and Xbox One versions of the game later this year.

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Travels in Chult

Discover the wonders of Chult

“I usually prefer any kind of magical class, any spellcasting class,” says Jen Mei, an artist at Cryptic Studios, when we ask about her D&D adventures. “For a while I was into healers, but not so much anymore. It’s a little stressful!”

She’s not wrong. With Acererak’s death curse putting anyone who is killed out for the count, permanently, it takes nerves of steel to be the person trying to keep everyone on their feet.

You’d therefore have to be especially foolhardy, or Volothamp Geddarm, to want to visit anywhere considered dangerous terrain, given that life is suddenly so much more precious in the Forgotten Realms. So if any region might need a little help attracting tourists, it’s Chult.

For all the olde-worlde charm of its crumbling architecture hidden within thick, verdant undergrowth, there's the ever-constant threat from... well, everything. It's not just the insects that'll eat you alive. They'll need to get in line behind the dinosaurs and the grungs of Dungrunglung, for starters.

Still, if anything can lure would-be treasure hunters or adrenaline fiends to this area, it's these beautiful posters crafted by Mei. Lead *Neverwinter* designer Thomas Foss had the idea to riff off the travel posters Shag (JoSH AGle) created for Disney, turning to his team for ideas of what these cool, retro images might include.

“We had a big team meeting, but the initial outline was actually pretty relaxed and full of giggles and laughter, where we set the tone of the posters,” says Mei, who graduated art school in 2014 and started out doing illustrations for video blogs before finding her way to Cryptic Studios.

“It was going to be more lighthearted and not too serious, and probably a little bit funny as well. We outlined the general subject matter, including things from the game that we would want to touch on: raptors, Volo, the Tomb of the Nine Gods. And we went from there.”

Movie Moments

Mei admits the team watched “a lot of *Indiana Jones*” while seeking inspiration for Chult's look and feel, to soak up that classic adventure movie vibe. But she doesn't feel the posters represent a particular style she's known for. “During different phases I like to explore different styles, and I can get really caught up on one style for a while. Then I switch. I have my own preferences but I don't have a specific art style that I've settled with,” she tells *Dragon+*.

“For me the main inspirations were other posters, including travel posters from a lot of other places. We had a lot of the Disney posters we were looking at, as well as National Parks travel posters.”

Working at Cryptic Studios for the past 10 months, on “a ton of fun projects” including *Neverwinter*, *Star Trek Online* and *Champions Online*, Mei has also been able to draw on her own experiences as a

gamer. She started out playing *Ragnarok Online*, back when most MMOs were subscription-based.

“I would save up my allowance or my lunch money and then mail it in so I’d be able to play. Since then I’ve been hooked on MMOs in general, although for a while I switched to single-player PC games. Other than that, tabletop games are a pretty recent thing. I played *Dungeons & Dragons* for a while when I was in college, and that’s how I became familiar with it.

“I played either a summoner or a druid, and I had my little pet with me. I was really lucky that my Dungeon Master was really wonderful at helping people who were very new to the game, so it was easy mode for us.”

Poster Girl

Each poster began its life as a sketch. “If I have some ideas, I will sketch them out. Traditional sketches with a pencil or a pen are fine, but it all eventually has to be on a computer somewhere, so generally it’s all done digitally. Especially in the initial stages, when it’s very important to get a lot of ideas down,” Mei says.



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“I tried to get one idea per poster and that way the subject matter was covered, but then I’d come up with additional alternative ideas for each poster. Luckily for me a lot of these ideas got bounced around

and we got some really great suggestions. The posters were a collaboration with a lot of people here on the *Neverwinter* team, and a lot of thanks go to Thomas [Foss] for his ideas and for our art director Ken [Morse] for helping me come up with these wonderful shapes.”

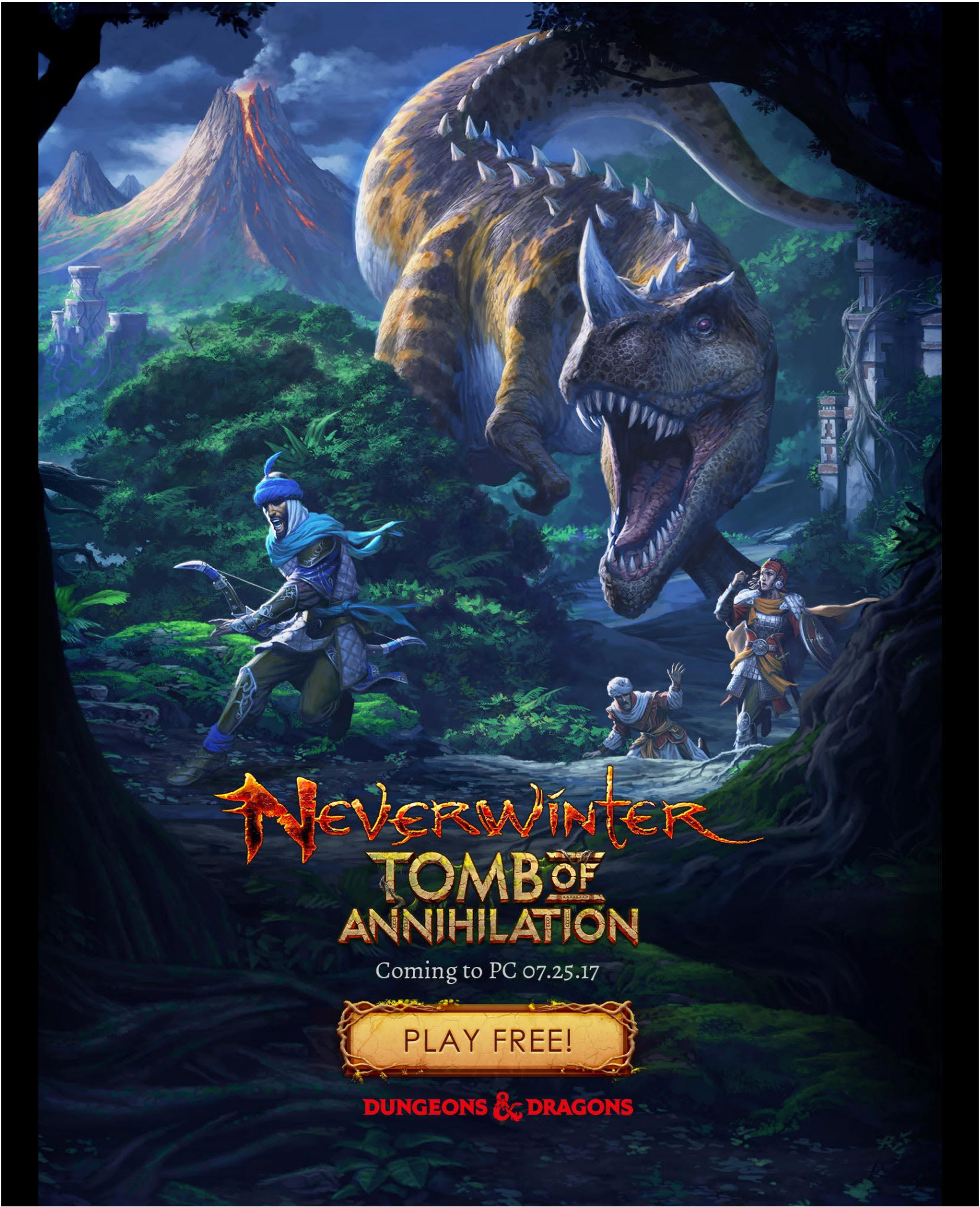
If *Dragon+* had to pick a favorite, it’d be the one featuring Volo, where he’s looking in the wrong direction as a T-rex looms in the background. Classic Volo. Mei was thrilled to get to draw the legendary explorer: “Volo is extremely awesome. I really love his costume. The moment I saw him I thought he looked really cool and confident.”

Getting to work with “real” creatures is also something of an unusual task for a D&D illustrator. There are high standards in traditional D&D art, going as far as preserving the specific shape of a red dragon’s horns or the number of eye stalks on a beholder. So was it easier to work with dinosaurs?

“I think it was a lot easier. There isn’t as much speculation about how many legs a T-rex has, although there’s a little bit of debate about whether they had feathers. But I was lucky enough to get hold of the D&D style guide for Chult and look at a lot of those Wizards of the Coast dinos,” Mei reveals. “Some of them I noticed were a little bit spikier than traditional dinosaurs as portrayed in scientific illustrations. But I really liked that artistic deviation from reality.”

Come to think of it, the T-rex chasing people across the bridge *does* have a spiky nose. “He might even be related to our *Neverwinter* dracolich,” Mei teases.

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NEVERWINTER TOMB OF ANNIHILATION

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS



Behind the Screen: Party Matters

Sam Weigelt explains how to handle large groups of players without stalling the action, or running out of snacks

Large-party D&D is some of the most fun you can have playing the game. Every session with a packed house feels like a big event and a celebration of the best game in the world. But there are also problems that come from trying to Dungeon Master for a group with eleven players. First, make sure you have a big table and enough snacks (tell *everyone* to bring snacks; it's better to have too many with a group this size). Next, think about the issues you might experience in a game with so many players, and do your best to set yourself up for success before the first die is rolled.

Dealing with Player Absence

One of the most common issues I've run into as a DM is scheduling. If you've ever run a campaign with eight or more players, it can become an absolute nightmare to try and find a time to play that works for everyone. My solution to this issue is to schedule regular sessions for when most players can attend, and minimize any bad

feelings from missing a session.

Running your campaign as a series of discrete episodes is one way to accomplish this. During a recent campaign, my players were cast as a new group of Gray Hands for Waterdeep. The Gray Hands are tasked with tackling threats that the normal guards cannot handle.



This led to a monster-of-the-week formula for the campaign, which also allowed the character of any player who didn't show up to be classed as unavailable for that mission. Players would return the following week and catch up on whatever was defeated, without feeling that they were falling behind on the story. This also led to some neat moments where heroes would share water-cooler stories of their triumphs to others who might have missed their heroics.

Episodic adventures are one way to deal with player absence, but you might sacrifice some depth by not having an epic campaign for players. In my regular game at work, our dungeon master, Justin, has embraced player absence as a part of the story itself. The campaign revolves around an investigation into cataclysmic events that are tearing the fabric of our plane to pieces. One of the devastating side effects has been that people (party members in particular) are being whisked away by malevolent purple bubbles into an unseen realm. This has been a fun in-world solution that gives players a way to roleplay their absence.

Whatever solution you choose, the important thing is to let players know that it's okay for them to miss sessions every now and again. This way you can schedule your sessions more regularly without breaking stride, and hold sessions with a simple majority of players without there being hurt feelings.

Adapting Personal Stories for Large Groups

Most players like a story to feel personal for their character. Having different motivations for characters in a group leads to emergent interactions and great conversations between characters. But when

you've got close to a dozen people with diverse character backgrounds, it can become difficult to tie your story in for each of them.

One handy solution to this is presented in the form of guilds and organizations. Many of the adventure books published for D&D contain motivations for various groups and smaller side missions for those groups. If you're dealing with a group of seven or eight players, I recommend having them group themselves into two or three of the suggested factions. This can form additional bonds between group members, and provide them with extra motivations to lean on while roleplaying. The introduction of factions can also inspire some players in their backstories. It's a good idea to introduce factions before your players begin character creation so everyone keeps them in mind.



Another option is to figure out which of your players care about their personal stories the most. Sometimes you'll have a couple of players who are just in it to kick doors and count loot. If you find that more than half your group is primarily into punching stuff and cracking jokes it could be a great opportunity to work with them to support personal stories for three or four characters while they act as bodyguards or some much-needed comic relief. In every group, you'll have players with different desires for how they want to play. For a larger group, it's more important than ever to take that into account from the beginning to set everyone up for fun.

Neither of these is a perfect solution. Truthfully, you're always going to lose a bit of the personal touch when DMing for a large group. Hopefully your players understand this and are willing to work with you to create the best experience for your whole playgroup.

Keeping Things Moving

Once you have more than eight players at a table, you can expect some things to take longer—particularly in combat. Combat in D&D can make for some of the most exciting moments of play, but in a larger game it only takes a few long turns to take the wind out of people’s sails.

I mentioned in an earlier article my success with making dice rolls myself as the DM instead of having players roll them. This applies doubly for large groups. Keep a cheat sheet of all your players’ most common rolls and roll their attacks yourself to speed up combat immensely. With new resources like *D&D Beyond*, it’s easier than ever for a DM to quickly reference whatever spell or item is being used and grab the dice needed.

That said, there is something special about those times where everything hangs on a player’s roll of the dice. These moments of tension are only heightened by having more excited faces at the table. I recommend always having each player ready with a d20 so they can make those dramatic skill checks themselves. On the other side of this; have your players roll their own saving throws, especially against area of effect spells. Sorting through ten rolls in a row is a nightmare, but hearing cheers of jubilation mixed with the howls of regret go around the table is every DM’s dream.



One more tip for speeding up combat: let players know when it will be their turn next. A simple “You’re up Ben! Lauren, you’re on deck!” provides a notable positive response. This also gives players an opportunity to think of great teamwork moments. If Ben is playing a cleric and knows that Lauren’s barbarian has the best chance of taking down the orc chieftain if she can land a hit with her greataxe, maybe he decides to cast *guiding bolt* to set her up for a sweet kill.

Closing Advice

I hope these tips give you more confidence to run adventures for large groups. D&D is my favorite hobby and I want to share it with as many of my friends as I can, sometimes all at once. Running an adventure for a dozen of your closest friends can feel daunting, but if you know what to watch out for, you'll do just fine. Just keep your house cool and have *everyone* bring snacks. Remember, at the end of the day D&D is all about having fun with your friends and you should do whatever works best to make that happen!



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The Best of the Dungeon Masters Guild

It all gets a little bit creepy, as *The Haunt* takes us deep into a mysterious manor.



The **Dungeon Masters Guild** is the perfect platform for creating, sharing, and publishing your adventures. Since its launch, hundreds of DMs, players, and fans have created new characters, monsters, spells, and locations, bringing a wealth of options and detail to the Forgotten Realms.

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But with so many choices, how do you know which ones to pick? Well, *Dragon+* is here to help. Each issue, we shine a spotlight on some of the best content on the DMs Guild, and speak to its creators to learn how it was made.

This issue we turn the lights down low, put on some spooky music

(worth a Google, trust us) and step into Montarthas Manor. *The Haunt* is a one-shot Dungeons & Dragons adventure designed for fourth or fifth level characters, which invites us to unlock a mansion's eerie secrets and drive back the evil within.

Best of all, *The Haunt* is available as an exclusive free download for *Dragon+* readers for the duration of this issue! But before you rush off to claim your module, enjoy our chat with its creator Phil Beckwith and learn more about the making of *The Haunt*, his thoughts on the ideal lighting for this module, and why minotaurs aren't always monsters.

When did you first play Dungeons & Dragons?

I was introduced to it at a friend's house back in 2000, so that's 17 years ago. He was an older friend of mine who had been playing since the '80s. I was only 18 at the time and he decided to get me into it. We played one session, which was a *Dragonlance* adventure, and then we didn't do it again at all, even though we were always planning to. I've always been into the *Dragonlance* novels and the *Forgotten Realms* novels by R.A. Salvatore, so I've always been into D&D products, but I never really played it again until fifth edition came out. I jumped on board then in 2014. I'm more of a storyteller and I think 5e lends itself to storytelling a little more than the crunchy, board game-type encounters that you get in 4e.

Have you introduced D&D to your kids?

I've got a twelve-year-old and I've already introduced her to it. We've run a few encounters, from a friend's book who is also on the DMs Guild, and she's loved them and keeps asking me for more. So I'm going to try and get a family game together soon, and get a few more friends involved too. DMing to kids is a little bit different but it's good to introduce them to something more than a screen or a tablet.

Flesh Golem

Not enough time to finish him... I do not want to die!

Solving the formula will tell me which the right parts are!

Handy 2, 7, 3, 8, ? Feet 3, 12, 6, 24, ? Three more body parts to complete him!

He will open it for me!

The door is locked. I am trying to get it coming! Only he knew the code... now his brain lies in the bucket for my flesh Golem!

THE SECOND FLOOR
The second floor of Montarth Manor is riddled with danger and evil creatures. While the Ground Floor was primarily utilized to immerse the players in the tragic story of the manor, the second floor is where the players will finally experience the horrors for themselves.

THE EVIL DOLL
On entering each of the rooms on the second floor, roll a d%, there is a 40% chance that the evil doll will make an appearance. Each time that she does, refer to the below table and use the respective event.

If another encounter happens in the room, run that encounter first, then describe the sudden appearance of the doll.

EVIL DOLL APPEARANCES

APPEARANCE	ENCOUNTER
1st time:	The doll will be sitting on any piece of furniture, she will do nothing until the heroes leave the room, which is when she will activate her Frightening Lullaby feature, then she will move to attack with her Claw . On her second turn she will use her Shadow Blend ability at first opportunity.
2nd time:	The doll will actively turn its head slowly with an evil grin on her face and attack the heroes with a Knife attack. For her second round action she will use her Shadow Blend ability to escape.
3rd time:	The doll will use her Shadow Blend ability to surprise attack one of the heroes. She will drop from the shadowy corners onto their back with a Knife attack. Then she will fight per initiative, unless Shadow Blend recharges (DM to check each round), then she will use this to escape. The doll will reappear again at a later part in the adventure (DM's discretion) to menace the party again and again.

FLAVOUR NOTES

Note 1: Describe the doll to have evidence of 'repair' after the first fight. It shows up with twice and patches mended over its body. This suggests that it has been repaired, and explains the doll's HP regeneration between encounters.

Note 2: Specially, as the PCs explore the manor, they can hear a haunting girlish giggle now and then. It is the doll playing with them, scaring them for its own amusement.

EVIL DOLL
Toy construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 11(1d10 + 42)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious
Senses darkness 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

False Appearance. While the evil doll remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary, inanimate children's doll.

Frightening Lullaby. Once per day, the evil doll can use a bonus action to sing a creepy children's lullaby. All creatures within a 30 ft. radius, that can hear it, must succeed a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw.

On a failed saving throw the creature will become frightened and must succeed on another DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to break the enchantment at the end of their next turn. On a second failed save, the creature will become paralyzed, and can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw on each turn. Once it has succeeded a saving throw, the creature will no longer be paralyzed.

Shadow Blend (Recharge 5-6). As a bonus action, the evil doll can disappear to the evil places that lurk in the shadows. Use this feature as an escape mechanism.

ACTIONS

Multitask. The evil doll makes two attacks: one with its knife and one with its claw.

Claw. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Knife. Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

(Select to view)

How long have you been using the DMs guild?

My first product came out in September 2016, so it's less than a year. I put out an adventure called *Something Smells Fishy*, which was a murder mystery adventure. It did okay but now that I'm more heavily into the community—and it is such a good community—I see a lot more people looking at my stuff.

What was the inspiration behind *The Haunt*?

I've always loved old-school horror movies. And what's more clichéd and trope-like than a haunted house? A lot of that inspiration comes from watching the old horror flicks from the '90s and 2000s. Those films with more atmosphere and suspense inspired a lot of what I wrote in *The Haunt*, more than just the gory stuff. I hadn't really played any previous horror-themed D&D modules. And anything I had played, had been more like the classic zombie crawl, so nothing really terrifying or suspenseful.

Is it important to have that story element, rather than simply being a dungeon crawl?

Every time I write a dungeon adventure, I try not just to provide a backstory, but to lace it with more of a story that can evolve through the dungeon. If you let the players discover that story as they go through, I find it brings the dungeon alive. I think that's important.

You actively suggest players run this module with dim lighting or candle light, and with spooky music in the background. Have you played through the module like that yourself?

I haven't, but I viewed my playtesters running it like that, and it's been absolutely fantastic. Especially when a certain character pops up, that's been very good. There've been a few online plays on Twitch, which have been great to watch, and I've been able to interact with those players so that's been really cool. If the players get into it, it's a really fun session. I haven't really had any negative feedback, and everybody has been great and supported it, so I'm very proud of it. It was a fun one to write, as well. Just the thought of the players' faces as I was creating it.



What are you working on right now?

I'm actually working on a few things. My next release is a collaboration with Chris Bissette from Loottheroom.uk, who has been doing a lot of my maps. We're working on a *Mini-Dungeons* book, which is three dungeons containing about seven encounters each, ranking in levels. They go from first tier to second tier, then upper second tier, with the option to lace those together through a story arc. You can then run it as one whole story if you choose.

I've also got the second story in my Minotaur trilogy series, which will be out soon. The first one has done quite well, so we thought we'd jump in and make a trilogy out of it. We've put an emphasis on the cultural minotaurs as opposed to the monster minotaurs, allowing us to get some really story-driven characters out of that.

Does it contain the classic maze for the minotaur?

There's a gauntlet, arena-style to it, so it's got more of a Roman Empire feel. But the challenges are there.

To see more of Phil Beckwith's work, visit PB Publishing on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).



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THE HAUNT

P.B. PUBLISHING PRESENTS

UNLOCK THE SECRETS AND DRIVE BACK THE EVIL FROM MONTARTHAS MANOR
A ONE SHOT DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 5E ADVENTURE DESIGNED FOR CHARACTERS OF 4TH - 5TH LEVEL



THE HAUNT

Credits

Author: Phil Beckwith (P.B. Publishing)

Layout: Phil Beckwith (P.B. Publishing)

Editor: Ken Carcas

Cover Artist: Pexles.com

Interior Illustrators: Phil Beckwith (P.B. Publishing) & Michael Wolmarans (used with permission)

Battle Map Cartographer: Chris Bissette (loottheroom.uk)

Playtesters: Tanya Jackson, Ryan Matthews, Anthony Petti, and Chris Bissette

Special Thanks to: My Wife Katie, Harrison O'Sullivan, Patrick E. Pullen, Dungeon Master's Guild Fanclub Facebook Page, and finally to everyone who has bought (and will buy) this adventure.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

The Haunt is a one-shot Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition horror themed fantasy adventure. This will be a challenging adventure for 4th level player groups of 3 to 5 players with some deadly encounters. However, ideally The Haunt is tailored as a medium difficulty adventure with plenty of excitement and danger for a 5th level party of 4 to 5 players.

This adventure is essentially a dungeon crawl, set in a haunted mansion. However the aim is not to just have the players move from room to room, killing creatures, and disarming traps. This adventure will have a focus for story and flavor.

The Haunt is split into three chapters; Chapter 1, this chapter, is the introduction. Chapter 2 focuses on the Ground Floor, the Basement and the Second Floor of the manor. Chapter 3 contains the epilogue to complete the adventure, and provides guidance for further adventuring.

To run this adventure you will need; The Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition Players Handbook, the Dungeons and Dragons 5th Edition Monster Manual and the content supplied within this adventure.

It is highly advised to run this adventure with dim lighting (or candle-lit), spooky organ music, and have a creepy children's lullaby ready to play. This will ensure the right vibe is achieved, and provide maximum satisfaction for you, the DM, and your players.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT AND MILESTONE LEVELING

This adventure is designed to utilize the Milestone leveling system, by which it is expected that the characters start at level 4 at the beginning of the adventure, and upon defeating the Night Hag Gertrude, will advance directly into level 5. This is only a suggestion, however, and you, as the DM, are in no way forced to use this method. This adventure will run perfectly fine with Experience Points based leveling, and you are encouraged to use XP if it is a better fit for you and your playing group.

BOXED TEXT

This adventure includes boxed text to assist those Dungeon Masters who like to have a description of a scene or location. The use of boxed text is by no means required; many great Dungeon Masters avoid the use of boxed text and instead feel more comfortable describing the action in their own words. You should consider what works best for you and your group. If you choose not to read aloud any of the text provided, you should at least paraphrase the information to keep the players aware of their environment.

SETTING AND LOCATION

The Haunt is designed to be a drop and play adventure that can fit into any setting and any campaign.

BACKGROUND

In ages past, there once stood a small city in these parts. The city, being subject to constant orc attacks, maintained a sufficiently defensive militia to ward away such attacks as they occurred. This militia stood for centuries, and many commanding officers came and went throughout the years. General Oscar Montarthas, known for being fair, firm and stern towards his men, was the last to command this post.

Not long from retirement, General Montarthas employed an advisor, Gertrude, who would assist the General in decision making with the forthcoming yearly orc invasions. This advisor was, in fact, an evil night hag, who planned to ruin the city and use its population to feed from the power of their life force. This was achievable by seducing the General, and corrupting his heart with a powerful green emerald.

The night hag firstly fed off the life force of the manor's residents, sucking them dry. As her power grew, the population from the city were next to fall. Heavily undermanned, the city ultimately fell to the orcs and was abandoned, with only the manor standing the test of time. To this day, the manor is the only still standing building to be seen for miles around.

Since that time, Gertrude has fed from the unfortunate passers-by who happen to accidentally wander into Montarthas Manor!

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The adventure does not have any setting specific adventure hooks though the following are provided as suggestions to hook your players and campaign into this adventure:

- The PCs have been approached by an elderly wizard who offers them a handsome reward for rescuing his apprentice who has entered but not returned from Montarthas Manor. This was two tenday ago.
- The PCs have heard rumor of a powerful necromantic jewel which lies in the heart of the manor. They hear it is worth a fortune to the right people.
- People have been going missing when traveling in the areas around the manor. The local town's mayor has offered some freelance adventuring work to anyone who is brave enough to enter and investigate the manor.
- A great evil emanates from the grounds of the manor; all good aligned heroes will feel a persistent urge to remove that evil from the world.
- The PCs have been traveling a long and barren road for many days. As the winds blow a blithering gale throughout the area, the heroes long for a reprieve. Craving a warm bowl of food, an ale, and a warm place to shelter, they come upon Montarthas Manor, which seems more hospitable as any other place around these parts.

CHAPTER 2: MONTARTHAS MANOR

This mansion was once the home to the appointed General who commanded a militia based in this area long ago. At the time of the General's death, the manor was cursed by a powerfully evil Night Hag, known simply as, Gertrude. It is said that a brilliant green emerald, imbued with a great and ancient power, lies at the heart of Montarthas Manor; this is rumored to be the source of the manor's evil.

THE GROUND FLOOR

As the heroes approach the mansion; read or paraphrase the following:

As you approach the mansion you notice that the blackness of the stone is unnatural and almost tainted. The air grows thick, and what little light that the night gives somehow becomes duller and duller the closer that you get to the evil dwelling.

1. MANOR ENTRYWAY

Read or paraphrase the following if the heroes enter via the front door:

You stand in near darkness. Before you are a set of steps that lead to the high archways that govern the entryway into the mansion proper. A large set of dark oak double doors sit patiently closed awaiting your advance. You notice small crystal blue eyes peering at you from behind a dark window beside the doorway.

See **Area 3** for a more detailed reference for the eyes.

These doors will not open, no matter how well the PC rolls for strength or thieves tools checks. They are supernaturally held tight. The doors will open on their own accord, once the heroes give up, turn away, or have been attempting to open them for more than a few minutes.

On a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check**, the players will notice that there is an eerie essence that surrounds the doors, as if they themselves do not wish to be opened.

Once the heroes decide to give up on the door and turn away from it read or paraphrase the following:

As you turn from the door you hear a loud '**creeeeaaak**' from behind you. You look back only to see that the doors have opened, on their own accord; those onlooking crystal blue eyes now gone. The looming black space behind the entryway stares menacingly at you, inviting you into its abode.

2. THE FOYER

This room is trapped; the trap is triggered whenever a living soul passes beyond the line between the two statues (see Ground Floor map). These, of course, are **gargoyles (MM, pg. 140)** and each of them will animate as soon as the trap is triggered. They will fight to the death.

Read or paraphrase the following when the heroes enter this room:

The entry foyer has a large open space with a floor of black marble. Two imposing looking demonic statues stand to either side of the foyer as if motionlessly keeping watch over the empty room.

3. THE STAIRWELL WAITING ROOM

This room is a raised platform, a step up from the foyer and the tea room, and is situated at the bottom of the stairwell. There is a cushioned sitting couch in the south-west corner of the room, it has an old worn children's doll laying on it, a successful **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check** will reveal the eyes of the doll are strangely similar to those seen peering through the window before entering the mansion from the front door.

In the north-east corner is the stairwell climbing up to **The Second Floor (page 9)**, or down to **The Basement (page 7)**. A portcullis blocks the way up until the party has explored at least 5 rooms on the Ground Floor (in total), it will then open by itself. Situated to the right of the stairwell is a **statue of a griffon** sitting atop of a pedestal holding up one of its front talons in a "knocking" type stance.



The griffon statue is an opening mechanism for secret door system 1 (**S1**). Pulling down on the griffon's raised talon will activate 2 secret doors. One will open, whilst the opposite will close, and vice versa.

This means that the two doors will never be open at the same time, and to get through the secret passage, the adventurer will need someone or something to pull the lever twice.

Note: This mechanism and secret door system is designed to split the party and isolate PCs to add to the suspense of the haunted mansion.

4. THE TEA ROOM

The mansion's tea room is a large sunken room with a fireplace and hearth situated in the north-west corner. There are three small round tables for guests to sit and consume tea and other assorted refreshments. A glass chandelier hangs on a sturdy chain from high above.

Event. As the heroes move through the room, the chandelier will fall and crash just behind them, the supporting chain swinging with movement.

S1: This is a secret door; it is activated by pulling the griffon statue's raised claw (a lever) down (**area 3**). This will open and close it. When the heroes first enter the mansion, the door is closed and looks like a wall; a **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** will successfully spot the secret door.

5. THE DINING ROOM

This is the General's dining room, and it has an open entrance to it via the tea room (**area 4**). Standing from outside the entrance the heroes will simply see an empty old dusty dinner table.

As soon as they step beyond the entrance for the first time, the place will come alive as the heroes step into the middle of a ghostly dinner party.

When the heroes step up the steps and into the dining room for the first time, read or paraphrase the following:

As you step up into the dining room from the sunken tea room, the air grows warm. Suddenly the room comes to life, as ghostly apparitions appear seated at the once empty table. A large dinner party is being held it seems, as a roasted hog materialises, along with plates of all varieties of food. Jugs of foaming ale are being shared between ghostly companions. A large spectral human man stands at the head of the table, saying nothing, a serious scowl and frown is cemented over his face as he overlooks his guests who seem to be enjoying themselves.

The ghosts pay no heed to the party providing they do not interact with them. If the adventurers leave the room without interacting with anything, the dinner party will simply disappear as soon as they step foot into another room.

If the heroes attempt to interact with any of the ghostly dinner party, read or paraphrase the following.

The room abruptly becomes quiet, all talking and laughter has ceased. Every ghost in the room is now facing you when the man at the head of the table rushes toward you, floating right through the hard wooden dining table. **"You should not be here! LEAVE THIS PLACE!!!"** He screams as he rushes closer.

Then as quick as the party had started, the room is empty, dark and cold again. The ghosts are nowhere to be seen, and there is no sign of the man who had rushed at you.

If the players linger here (for more than 5 minutes in-game time), the room will engulf itself in flames, these are apparitions also.

Have the players roll a **DC 15 Wisdom saving throw**; failure results in 1d4 psychic damage per round that their heroes stay in the room.

Once the heroes leave the room, they will notice that the flames disappear as quickly as they began. Nothing appears to be burnt in the room, and the heroes don't appear to have burns to their bodies.

6. THE BALLROOM

The ballroom was once the center of entertainment for the General and his distinguished guests. Many nights were spent drinking, dancing and laughing. In the end, though, this became the place where his world started to fall apart.

As the heroes enter the ball room, read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter the large double doors, a large room opens before you. A large chandelier hangs from the high ceiling, and an old dance floor stretches before you. A large glass folding door opens onto an alfresco area on the east wall.

Materializing from thin air you see the man who had rushed at you, ending the ghostly dinner party in the dining room. He seems younger somehow, as if this is a vision into an earlier time in his life.

A beautiful woman enters from nothingness, dressed in a flowing black gown, her eyes dark and dangerous. He holds her and looks into those eyes, and she looks back into his.

"We will disappear, just the two of us, my love" the man says dreamily.

"Oh, General Montharthas, but what of your wife? And we have work to do." She reminds him.

"Never mind her, she will cope. And your army of undead... Let us not talk of this tonight" he replies as their apparitions fade and the room is once again empty.

The heroes will find nothing of note in the room other than the alfresco area entrance which leads to **area 7**.

7. ALFRESCO AREA

This alfresco area is a fenced off private swimming pool area, with three ruined deck chairs at the southern end of the pool.

The water remaining in the pool is still and algae green, nothing can be seen beneath its surface. Every now and then, a ripple emerges from its depths. There are multiple skeletal remains around the closest side of the pool.

A **DC 13 Wisdom (Passive Perception)** notices a gleaming bejeweled sword laying on the deck beside the pool on the opposite side of the area (shown on the map as an X).

If the heroes attempt to retrieve the sword from the opposite side of the alfresco area, or if they come within 5ft of the poolside, a guard **Beholder Zombie (MM, pg. 316)** rises from the murky green water and will attack the party. The Beholder Zombie will not leave the alfresco area, but the heroes must defeat it one way or another to retrieve the jeweled sword.

Loot: Choose either one of the following:

- **Level 4 (party average) and below;** any +1 magic weapon that the party is lacking.
- **Level 5 (party average) and higher;** Flame Tongue (longsword) (DMG, pg. 170).

8. THE SECRET PASSAGE

This room is bare and only boasts hard stone blocks on all of the walls. At either end of the room is a door that can only be opened and closed by pulling the statue griffon talon (**area 3**).

The secret door system is designed so that only 1 door can be opened at any one time. When one opens, the other closes. And the trigger needs to be done from outside of the room. This means that it might require 2 people to get through to the opposite side.

9. EMPTY THOROUGHFARE

This room is empty and provides a walkway for those who know the secret ways of the manor.

10. THE WIZARD'S BEDROOM

An old rotted wooden bed lies in shambles to the southern side of this 20x20 ft. room. There is an old desk, much in the same state as the bed, to the western side of the room. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check** will find:

- A scroll of invisibility. A **DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana) check** will reveal its magical preservation to stand the test of time, and
- A page from an ancient journal. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** will alert the players that touching it will make it crumble to dust. It reads the following:

12TH DAY OF MIRTUL

TODAY THE GENERAL MEETS WITH HIS NEW ADVISOR, SHE COMES HIGHLY REGARDED! HOPEFULLY SHE CAN GUIDE THE GENERAL DOWN THE RIGHTEOUS PATH.

14TH DAY OF MIRTUL

THE NEW ADVISOR GERTRUDE HAS ONLY BEEN IN OUR SERVICE FOR TWO DAYS, AND ALREADY I SEE A CHANGE IN THE GENERAL. HE HANGS ON TO EVERY WORD SHE SPILLS, I ONLY HOPE THAT IT IS THE WORD OF GOOD.

25TH DAY MIRTUL

SOMETHING IS WRONG. THE GENERAL DISMISSES THE LORDS, HE HAS ADVISED THAT HE WILL NOT MEET WITH THEM IN COUNCIL ABOUT THE ORC ARMIES MARCHING UPON US. THIS NEW ADVISOR HOLDS ALL OF HIS ATTENTION, SHE FEEDS HIM THE POISON OF HER WORDS AND TURNS HIM AGAINST HIS PEOPLE. SHE MUST BE STOPPED!

30TH DAY OF MIRTUL

TODAY IS THE DAY THAT I, MARPLE BRIGHTSHINE, MAKE A STAND FOR THE GREATER GOOD! SHE WILL DIE BY MY HAND AND MY NAME WILL BE FOREVER MUDDIED. BUT I SEE HER FOR WHAT SHE REALLY IS, A NIGHT WITCH!

The Journal ends with that last entry, nothing more.

Note: The month of Mirtul is used in the above journal entry, this is a Forgotten Realms calendar month. If you are running this adventure in another setting, please feel free to change the month in the journal to that of your choosing.

11. THE SPELL PRACTICE ROOM

This room is a large open space, with three stone mannequins along the southern wall. These seem to have once been practice targets as behind them, large black blast marks dirty the wall with silhouettes. There is a large iron double door entry into the next room; the doors are blackened from fire.

The secret way out. There is a secret door that can be found with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** along the northern wall. A successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check** opens the door; its trigger mechanism being lost long ago in a fire that destroyed the Library (*area 12*).

12. THE LIBRARY

All four walls of this room are badly burnt. There is ash and rubble littered across the floor, mixed in amongst the remains of old burnt books from ages past. Faintly, in amongst the remains, can be seen the slightly hidden piles of humanoid skeletons. The only thing that seems intact and whole in this room is a leather cloak draped over the half melted remains of a metal coat stand.

This is in fact a **Cloaker (MM. pg. 41)**. If the players are acting suspicious toward it, a successful **DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) check**, will recognise it as a cloaker.

Once the Heroes are beyond the threshold of the doors and inside the old burnt library, the cloaker will surprise them (if not discovered) and attack until it has 5 hit points remaining. It will then attempt to flee to another part of the wizard's quarters, only to surprise the party again at the **DM's discretion**.

13. ESCAPE PREPARATION ROOM

This room is a secret room that appears to be a kind of preparation room. There are 4 faded black cloaks with hoods hanging on hooks. This was once the escape route for the General and his Wizard, should the manor be taken in a siege. A door leads out to a courtyard garden area.

14. THE COURTYARD

This courtyard garden area is lined with shrubs and hedge bushes. In the north-eastern corner of the courtyard, there is a hidden hatch through shrubs and the outer wall, allowing those using the passage a ready escape to the field beyond (not featured in this adventure). A successful **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices the hatch.

15. THE BASEMENT

The heroes will find an open door at the bottom of the stairs. Once the heroes enter the basement, the door will slam shut and a noxious green gas will begin to fill the room. There is a half made flesh golem lying on an operating table, with a bucket of body parts beside it.

On the desk beside the operating table the heroes will find a waxy lab diagram with notes scribbled over it. One of the notes is an incomplete "formula" (number sequence puzzle). It will provide the heroes with the correct body parts to use.

Each of the numbers will align to a tagged corresponding body part. Give players the handout on the next page.

Read or paraphrase the following:

You enter the room, and suddenly the door slams shut behind you. A locking mechanism with a 4 digit code blocks the way and green noxious gas begins to fill the room.

In the room you see a half made flesh golem lying on an operating table, it is missing only **hands, feet and a brain**. A large mechanism with a crank and coils sits behind it with rods connected to each of the golem's temples.

To the left of the golem are three large buckets holding many feet, hands, and brains. Some rusty operating tools and a needle and thread sit on the table next to it.

To the right of the golem sits a desk with a waxed scrap of paper that looks to be a diagram of a humanoid body. It has notes scribbled all over it.

To escape the trapped room the heroes must;

- **First:** Figure out which body parts to use. As each of the numbers are correctly answered, that body part can automatically be found in the bucket with a corresponding tagged number. **Answer: 4, 12, 50**
- **Second:** Succeed **DC 13 Intelligence (Medicine checks)** for each body part to attach them to the flesh golem. If the PCs fail the skill check 3 times, the gas will render them unconscious (see the note below).
- **Third:** Kick-start the golem. A **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** realises that either starting the magical mechanism with the crank to conduct electricity through it, or use any lightning based spell will wake the golem.

Once the golem is complete, it will use the thoughts from the brain inserted into its body to open the door.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As the air energizes and you feel static energy tingle around the room, the now completed golem begins to move. It awakens, straight away sniffing the air. It moves quicker than you expect and rushes towards the locking mechanism on the door. Pushing 4 digits, the door opens and the gas clears.

Loot: A **Bag of Holding (DMG. pg. 153)** can be found.

Note: If the heroes are unable to solve the puzzle after 20 minutes real-time; the gas will render them unconscious, and they will wake in Level 2 (area 8: The General's Broken Heart) in a pile. Run that scene as described.

NUMBER SEQUENCE PUZZLE: ANSWERS

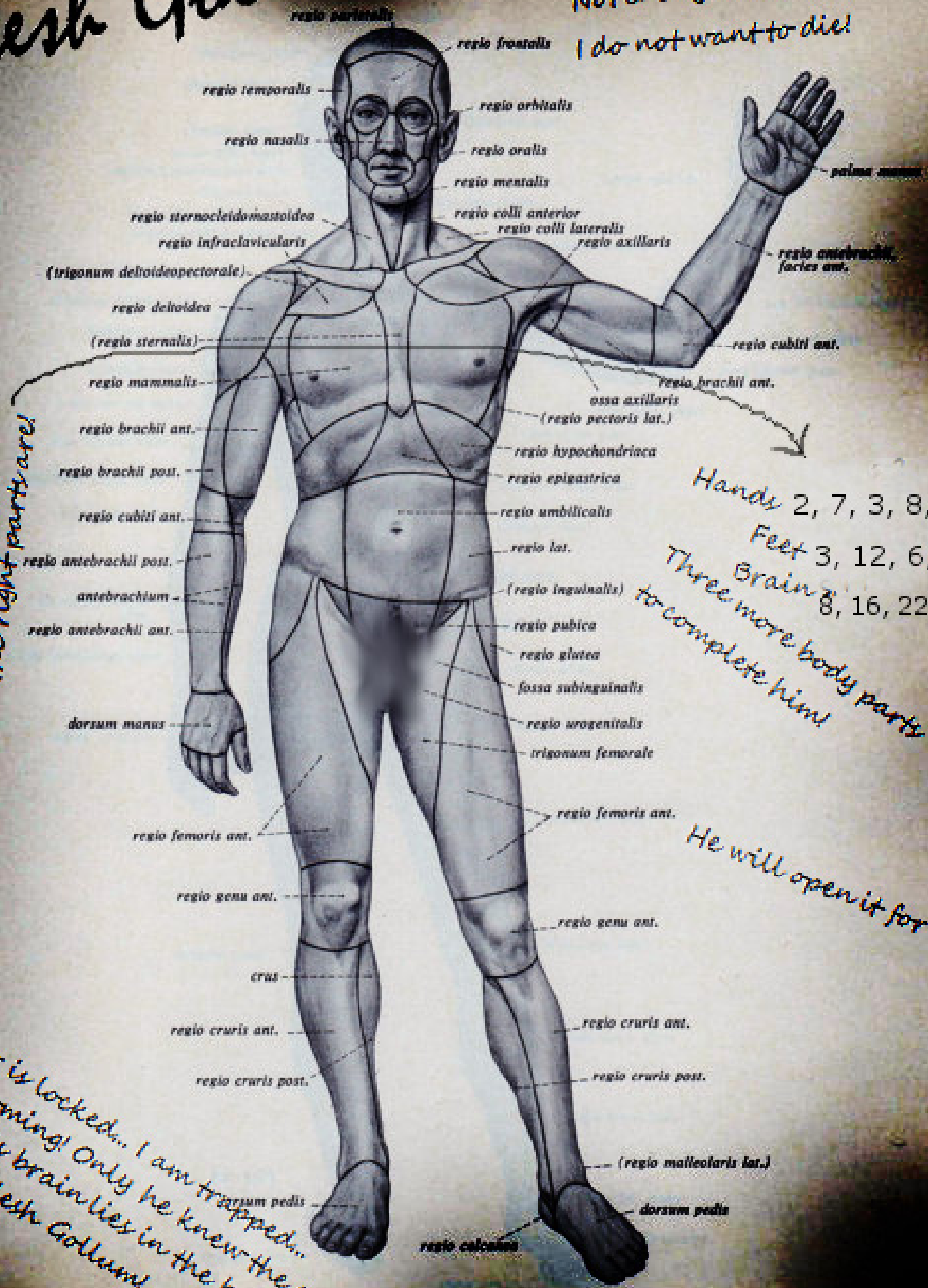
2, 7, 3, 8, ? (**4**: SEQUENCE IS +5, -4, +5, -4)

3,12,6,24,? (**12**: SEQUENCE IS x4, /2, x4, /2)

8,16,22,44,? (**50**: SEQUENCE IS x2, +6, x2, +6)

Flesh Gollum

Not enough time to finish him...
I do not want to die!



Solving the formula will tell me which the right party are!

Handy 2, 7, 3, 8, ?
Feet 3, 12, 6, 24, ?
Brain 8, 16, 22, 44, ?
Three more body parts to complete him!

He will open it for me!

The door is locked... I am trapped... gas is coming! Only he knew the code... now his brain lies in the bucket for my flesh Gollum!

THE SECOND FLOOR

The second floor of Montarthas Manor is riddled with danger and evil creatures. Whilst the Ground Floor was primarily utilised to immerse the players in the tragic story of the manor, the second floor is where the players will finally experience the horrors for themselves.

THE EVIL DOLL

On entering each of the rooms on the second floor, **roll a d%**, **there is a 40% chance that the evil doll will make an appearance**. Each time that she does, refer to the below table and run the respective events.

If another encounter happens in the room, run that encounter first, then describe the sudden appearance of the doll.

EVIL DOLL APPEARANCES

APPEARANCE	ENCOUNTER
1st time:	The doll will be sitting on an any piece of furniture, she will do nothing until the heroes leave the room, which is when she will activate her Frightening Lullaby feature, then she will move to attack with her Claw . On her second turn she will use her Shadow Blend ability at first opportunity.
2nd time:	The doll will actively turn its head slowly with an evil grin on her face and attack the heroes with a Knife . For her second round action she will use her Shadow Blend ability to escape.
3rd time:	The doll will use her Shadow Blend ability to surprise attack one of the heroes. She will drop from the shadowy corners onto their back with a Knife attack . Then she will fight per initiative, unless Shadow Blend recharges (DM to check each round) , then she will use this to escape. The doll will reappear again at a later part in the adventure (DM's discretion) to menace the party again, and again.

FLAVOUR NOTES

Note 1: Describe the doll to have evidence of 'repairs' after the first fight. It shows up with twine and patches mended over its body. This suggests that it has been repaired, and explains the doll's HP regeneration between encounters.

Note 2: Sporadically, as the PCs explore the manor, they can hear a haunting girlish giggle now and then. It is the doll playing with them, scaring them for its own amusement.

EVIL DOLL

Tiny construct, chaotic evil

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 119(14d10 + 42)

Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)

Damage Vulnerabilities fire

Damage Resistances piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

False Appearance. While the evil doll remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an ordinary, inanimate children's doll.

Frightening Lullaby. Once per day, the evil doll can use a bonus action to sing a creepy children's lullaby. All creatures within a 30 ft. radius, that can hear it, must succeed a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw.

On a failed saving throw the creature will become frightened and must succeed on another DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to break the enchantment at the end of their next turn. On a second failed save, the creature will become paralyzed, and can attempt a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw on each turn. Once it has succeeded a saving throw, the creature will no longer be paralyzed

Shadow Blend (Recharge 5-6). As a bonus action, the evil doll can disappear to the evil places that lurk in the shadows. Use this feature as an escape mechanism.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The evil doll makes two attacks: one with its knife and one with its claw.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

16. THE HALLWAY

There is a soft green glow flickering in this hallway, but there seems to be no source for the light. A **DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check** will show that the source of the green glow is necrotic energies moving about the manor's second floor, like blood through a vein.

17. GUEST-ROOMS

These rooms are standard guest rooms; both are dusty and full of sticky cobwebs. Upon entry to either Guest Room, roll 1d20; if you roll an even number, 2 x **Phase Spiders (MM. pg. 334)** will phase in and attempt to attack the heroes from above the doorway.

18. THE LAUNDRY ROOM

This is an old laundry room with a bench that runs along the southern wall, and a large iron stirring pot for washing clothes.

A ghostly apparition is stirring an ectoplasmic load of dirty clothes. She fades once the party attempts to interact or they enter the room.

19. THE GUESTS WASH ROOM

This room has a large washing tub, a bench stretches around the south-western corner of the room. An old bloodied towel hangs from a towel rack.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter what looks to be an old washroom, you first notice the bloodied towel hanging from the towel rack. A wash tub sits along the northern wall of the room. Then you notice it; a naked body lies within the otherwise empty tub, blood gushing from the woman's wrists.

The 'body' is a **ghost (MM. pg. 147)**, and will only attack if the heroes attempt to "save" it or interact with it in any way.

20. THE SERVANT'S LIVING SPACE

As the heroes approach this door from the hallway, they will hear a thumping sound, getting louder and louder the closer that they get to it. Behind the door awaits a **Ghast (MM. pg. 148)** who commands 2 x **Ghouls (MM. pg. 148)**.

They can smell the living flesh coming their way, and in their excitement, are giving away their position of surprise. Neither party will be surprised when the door is finally opened.

The door is locked and it has been for a very long time. A successful **DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check** will unlock the door.

Due to their irrational state caused from hunger, the ghast and ghouls will attack and fight to the death. The room is the old servant's living quarters, **5a** is the shared lavatory and **5b** is the shared bathing area.

21. THE KITCHEN

This room is the Kitchen. There is a hotplate with a fire-pit below it, though it has not been used for a millennia. There is a bench on the southern wall, and wooden cupboards fixed above head height on all sides. Pots, pans, knives and cups, dulled and tarnished from age, hang from hooks below the cupboards. Along the southern wall there is a hole in the floor which was once used for a pulley driven dumb waiter between the downstairs kitchen and this room. The hole is big enough for a medium sized creature to fit through it.

The heroes will instantly see a small treasure chest on the hotplate on the opposite side of the room when they enter. It is locked; a **DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools) check** will unlock it, or a **DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check** will break it open.

It's a trap! When the heroes enter the room, a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check** notices the air has grown colder and the cupboard doors move slightly with a creak by themselves.

As soon as the heroes reach halfway across the kitchen, an unknown force will cause the knives, pots, and pans to slowly detach themselves from their hanging hooks. The cupboards above head height then suddenly start to fling open and closed viciously. With each thrust of the cupboard doors; the ancient knives, pots and silverware will fly across the room to crash into the opposite wall.

The cupboards contain the essence of a **Poltergeist**. Each time a knife is detached from its hook and thrown, the cupboard door will open and close. Destroying the cupboards will stop the attacks from that particular cupboard. Each cupboard is **AC 10** and has **10 Hit Points**. Destroying 4 of the cupboards will destroy the Poltergeist.

This should be treated as a combat encounter, have your players roll initiative as soon as the knives, pots, and pans detach themselves from their hooks. Any hero inside the room will need to succeed on a **DC 13 Dexterity saving throw** at the start of each of their turns, else be hit by multiple projectiles for a total of **1d6 bludgeoning & slashing damage**.

Treasure: The small chest contains 248 gp, the markings on the coins are of an unknown origin, lost to history.

22. THE GENERAL'S CLERK

This is the clerk's office, where a writing desk sits in the south-western corner and a single door on the eastern wall. Behind the desk, a skeleton is busy at work writing down something in a translucent ethereal ledger book.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you enter the room you notice something that seems very unnatural, though not unexpected in a place such as this. It is a skeleton busy at work behind a writing desk, frantically writing notes in an translucent ethereal ledger book.

It looks up at you with empty eye sockets, its jaw starts to move as a hauntingly high pitched voice says *"ahh, you are here! He has been waiting for you!... You may proceed Advisor Gertrude!"*

From behind, you feel something evil and dark trespass through your bodies, as the aspect of a dangerously beautiful woman with dark and deadly eyes walks straight through you, a smirk on her ghostly smile. She walks straight through the closed door and disappears, whilst the skeleton clerk goes back to his duties.

If the heroes attempt to physically interact with the skeleton it will fall limp and crumble to ash. It will ignore them otherwise.

23. THE GENERAL'S WAITING ROOM

A long bench stretches the northern wall of this extended waiting room. On the southern wall, two large oak doors stand closed. A tree is carved upon the door with leaves carved at the end of each branch, saying the names of each general that had served and lived within the manor, including their years of servitude. The Generals names appear from the earliest at the top to those later further down. The last name on the tree says "General Oscar Montarthas"; there are no more.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As you look around the room, it appears empty at first, but within the blink of an eye, a small pretty girl, no more than 5 or 6, is suddenly sitting on the long bench that stretches the northern wall. She seems to be waiting patiently. The dark and deadly looking woman appears in the room, smiles at the child, and offers her a children's doll. The girl smiles with joy as the woman evaporates. The child's smile turns to pain and anguish as blood soaked stab wounds begin to appear on her silky white dress. She falls limp and tumbles to the floor before disappearing. You notice that the doll is left lying on the bench, a knife in its hand and a grin on its face.

- If the heroes have not yet defeated the evil doll in a final confrontation during exploration of the manor thus far, have the doll attack the heroes; it will fight until it has only **5 Hit Points remaining**, and then use its **Shadow Blend** feature to escape once more.
- If the doll has been defeated earlier in the adventure, the doll that has been left in this room is just an apparition and will disappear if the heroes physically interact with it.

The door, although unlocked, appears to be stuck from the other side. A successful **DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check** will open the door. Upon opening, the heroes will notice a large, heavy, chest has been strategically placed to prevent the door from opening.

Treasure: The chest contains small iron bars, 12 in total, worth 1gp a piece.



24. A GENERAL'S BROKEN HEART

As the heroes open the door, have them each roll a **DC 17 Strength Saving Throw** to resist being pulled involuntary into the dark room beyond, the doors slamming behind them.

Note: If, by some miracle, they all pass the saving throw, then only the lowest roll will be pulled into the room.

As the fight erupts within the room, those who resisted the 'pull' will have to contend with bashing down the **door (AC 13, 40 Hit Points)** to save their comrade, whilst their comrade proceeds to get butchered. This will happen slowly, of course, to allow the others a chance to enter the fight.

Once the doors slam, read or paraphrase the following:

As soon as you hear the doors slam shut from behind, a great gust of wind blasts the room around you; sending dust, paper and curtains flying around the room. Piles of rotting corpses litter the creaky wooden floor.

Then you see him, on the ceiling, a shell of a man, shriveled, tortured and used. His body and arms semi moulded into the blackened muck that replicates a ceiling. Slimy black vines creep through his flesh pinning him to the ceiling, as the ends of the vines expand into drooling suckers that feed from his life force.

A glow of green hue emanates from his chest where a green emerald spews out evil energies into the mansion distributing the feed to all areas of the living building. The most potent looking of these green energies flows directly into a lifeless body slumped with its head flung back over a wooden chair.

Once the heroes move to investigate further, or attempt to leave the room, read or paraphrase the following:

The body snaps its head back from over the chair and back into position. You recognise her from the apparitions of the manor. It is the dark advisor Gertrude. She grins wide and evil, then cackles a haunting laugh as her features grow long and haggard. Her skin turns midnight blue and her pupils turn the red of the 9 hells. She attacks!

This is Gertrude, she is an ancient **Night Hag (MM. pg. 178)**, and has been feeding off the necrotic energies for a millennia.

TACTICS

Round 1: Gertrude will cast **Create Undead** to create 3 ghouls from the littered corpses around the room. She will command them to attack the closest hero.

Round 2: She will cast **Magic Missile** targeting 3 different heroes if possible.

Round 3: Gertrude will then cast **Create Undead** again to create 3 more ghouls and command them to attack the closest hero.

Bonus action: She will pull green necrotic energy from her victim on the ceiling and regain **3d6 Hit Points**.

Round 5: Gertrude will cast **Ray of Enfeeblement** on the largest and strongest looking PC.

Round 6 and onward: She will attack to kill remaining conscious heroes, as per DM's discretion.

Note: Gertrude has 1 more bonus action charge of necrotic HP regain (**3d6**) from her victim on the ceiling.

DEVELOPMENT

If Gertrude is defeated, she will shrivel and die, turning into a pool of black ooze. Her shriveled victim will still be attached to the ceiling; however after a moment the black vines will wither away and die. As the vines die; they release the man with the emerald embedded into his chest, and he falls heavily to the floor.

Read or paraphrase the following:

As the vines release the victim on the roof, he falls heavily to the floor, landing on his back with an **'oof'**. He breathes shallowly and as you look over him he smiles at you, and whispers **'thank you'** before breathing his last breath and finally disintegrating into a pile of ash. The emerald is the only thing remaining, and it shines brightly with arcane energy.

A successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check** will show that the energy emanating from the emerald is necrotic energy. **Identifying** this relic will reveal the emerald's power and details (as shown on page 13).

Once the heroes have finished with this room, or if they linger too long, read or paraphrase the following:

You all suddenly feel the room rumble, as dust falls through the cracks and holes in the ceiling. Then, suddenly, the entire manor begins to shake, as the walls start to decay and erode. The manor, it seems, is caving in on itself, and will likely be nothing but a pile of rubble before long.

The heroes will need to leave immediately. The building will start to fall in on them on the following events:

- If the heroes linger for too long in the room.
- After moving through three areas/rooms of the manor

Loot: The heroes will find the Leacher's Emerald, Gertrude's heartstone, and her soul bag (containing 1 evil soul).

When the building starts to fall: For every 15 ft. that the heroes move (or if they linger in one spot), each hero must succeed a **DC 13 Dexterity Saving Throw** to dodge the falling debris, on failure they will take 1d10 bludgeoning damage. **After 8 Saving throws:** Montarthas Manor will fall into dust and rubble. Any hero still inside the manor will take **1d100+10 bludgeoning damage**.

GERTRUDE: NIGHT HAG

Medium fiend, neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +7, Insight +6, Perception +6, Stealth +6

Damage Resistances cold, fire; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non magical weapons that aren't silvered

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses darkvision 120ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Abyssal, Common, Infernal, Primordial

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The hag's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: detect magic, magic missile

2/day each: plane shift (self only), ray of enfeeblement, sleep, create undead

Magic Resistance. The hag has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

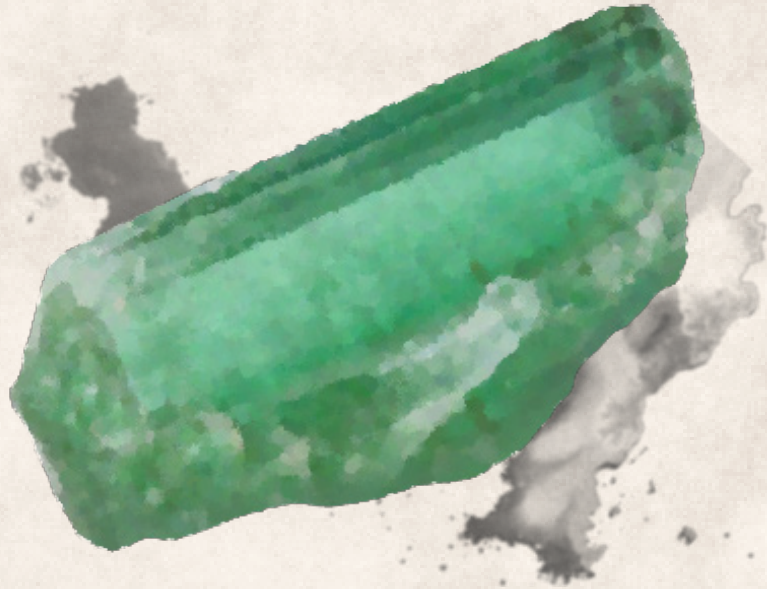
ACTIONS

Claws (Hag Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) slashing damage.

Change Shape. The hag magically polymorphs into a Small or Medium female humanoid, or back into her true form. Her statistics are the same in each form. Any equipment she is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. She reverts to her true form if she dies.

Etherealness. The hag magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. To do so, she must have a heartstone in her possession.

Nightmare Haunting (1/Day). While on the Ethereal Plane, the hag magically touches a sleeping humanoid on the Material Plane. A protection from evil and good spell cast on the target prevents this contact, as does a magic circle. As long as the contact persists, the target has dreadful visions. If these visions last for at least 1 hour, the target gains no benefit from its rest, and its hit point maximum is reduced by 5 (1d10). If this effect reduces the target's hit point maximum to 0, the target dies, and if the target was evil, its soul is trapped in the hag's soul bag. The reduction to the target's hit point maximum lasts until removed by the greater restoration spell or similar magic.



THE LEACHER'S EMERALD

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

This green emerald is an ancient relic imbued with necrotic energies by an evil necromancer long ago.

Its master and wielder, once attuned, can attempt to magically implant the emerald into the chest of any living creature. The creature must successfully win a **Grappling (PHB, pg. 195)** contest to be able to resist the attempt.

As a bonus action the emerald's master can use it to transfer 3d6 Hit Points from the victim to them-self if it is within 60 ft. The emerald has **two charges per day and regains all of its charges at dawn.**

The gem exerts no control over the victim otherwise, but the master of the emerald knows its direction and distance at all times. If the emerald crosses into another plane, the owner knows which one.

Extraction. A skilled physician can remove the gem on a successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Medicine) check**, but the patient suffers **4d10 piercing damage** on every attempt. A greater restoration spell can be used to eject the gem.

The emerald radiates evil, and should its 'master' ever use it for its intended purpose, their alignment permanently shifts a step closer to evil.

CHAPTER 3: EPILOGUE

As the heroes escape the manor it will fall in a heap of rubble. Depending on how this adventure ends, and the fate of the evil doll, read or paraphrase one of the following epilogues:

IF THE EVIL DOLL SURVIVES

If the evil doll survives, read or paraphrase the following:

You manage to escape the falling manor, which has been the epitome of true evil. The night hag, Gertrude, has been defeated and the undead have been laid to rest.

You know not who the hag's victim was, however, but they did leave you the emerald in their departure.

Now, standing before you, are the piles of rubble and decayed remains of the manor; finally resting in peace.

The night begins to grow old as the first hints of dawn start to creep over the horizon. It is then, amongst the woods that surround the manor; you all notice a pair of glowing crystal blue eyes.

A horrifying girlish giggle carries over the, now, still night air, and the eyes fade into blackness.

This ending has been left open on purpose. This gives you, the DM, a possible reoccurring villain in the Evil Doll. She could simply disappear, leaving the party paranoid as they leave the area, expecting her to ambush them night after night. Or the doll could follow the party and randomly haunt them for the rest of their journey, only to engage them later down the track in another epic climatic battle.

IF THE EVIL DOLL WAS DEFEATED

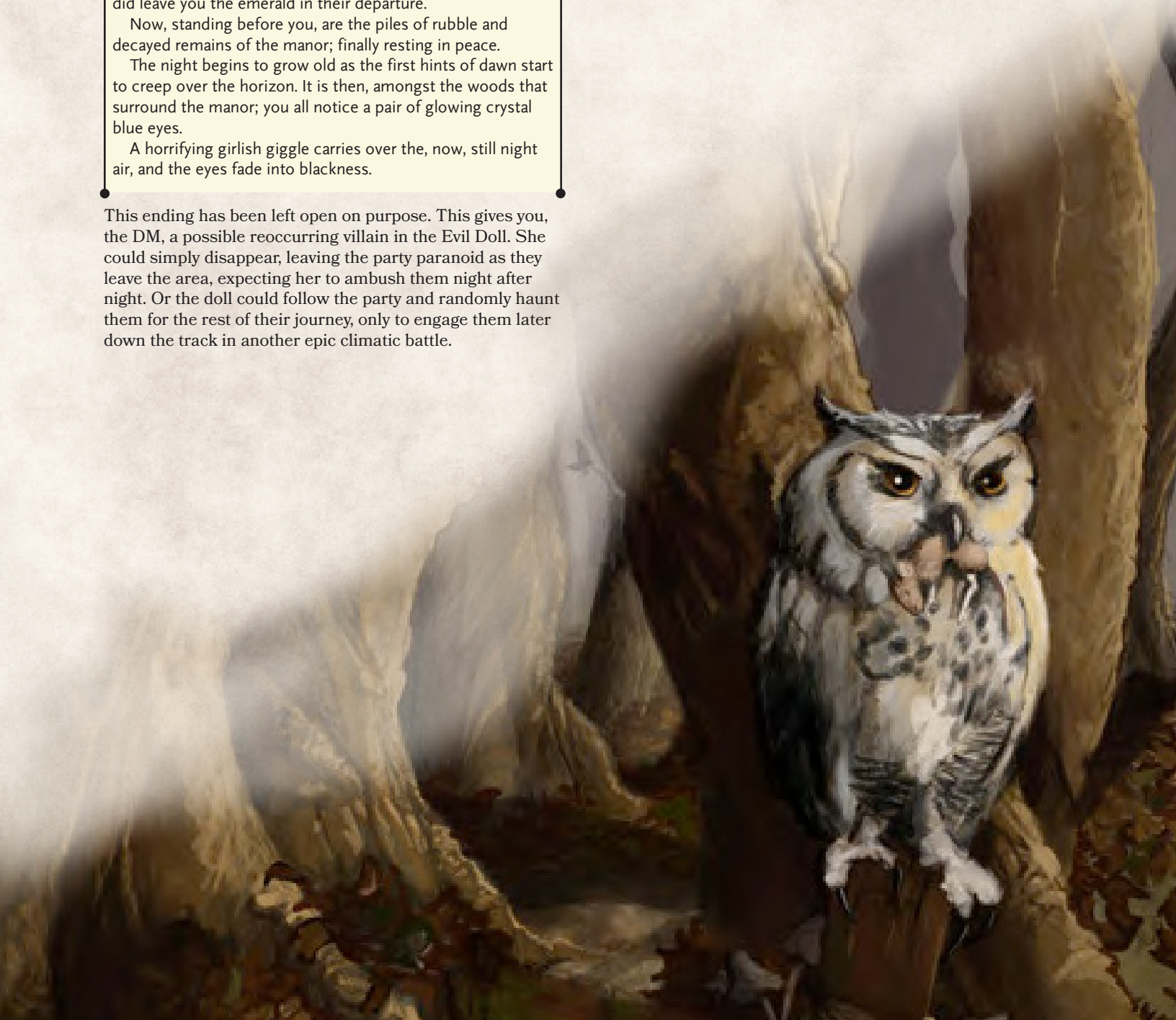
If the evil doll was defeated, read or paraphrase the following:

You manage to escape the falling manor, which has been the epitome of true evil. The night hag, Gertrude, has been defeated, the horrifying evil doll was removed from this world, and the undead have been laid to rest.

You know not who the hag's victim was, however, but they did leave you the emerald in their departure.

Now, standing before you, are the piles of rubble and decayed remains of the manor; finally resting in peace.

The night begins to grow old as the first hints of dawn start to creep over the horizon. Today is going to be a good day, well a better day, you hope.



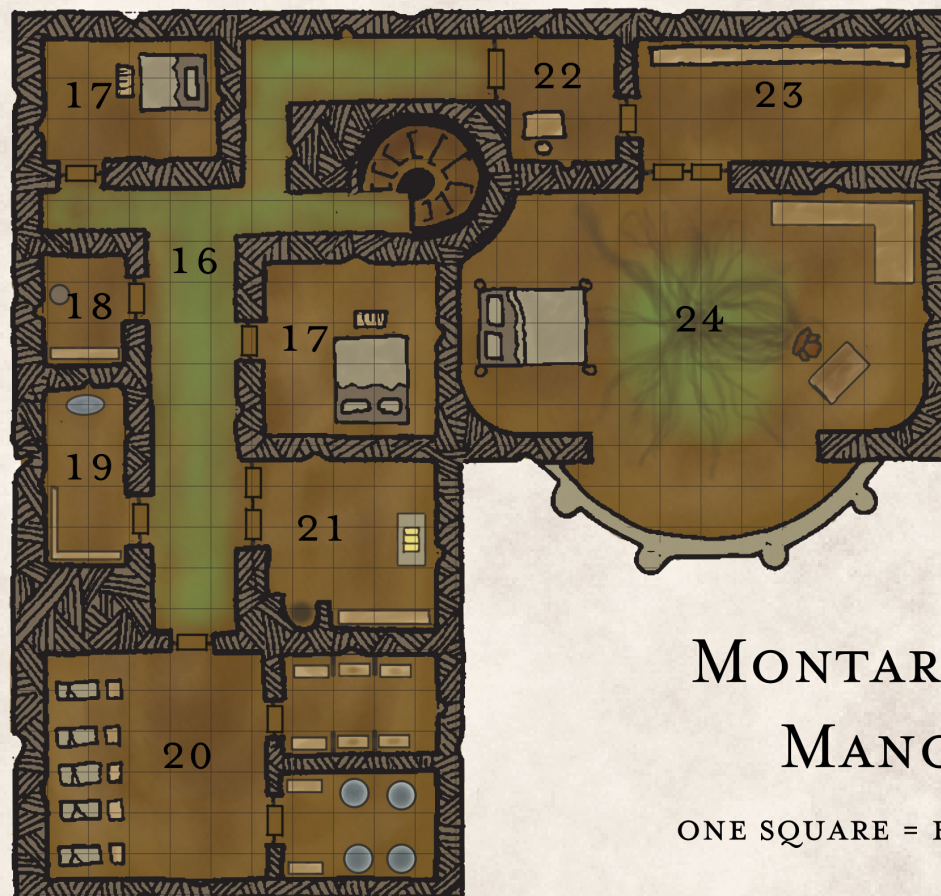
APPENDIX: A

DUNGEON MASTER'S MAP

GROUND FLOOR



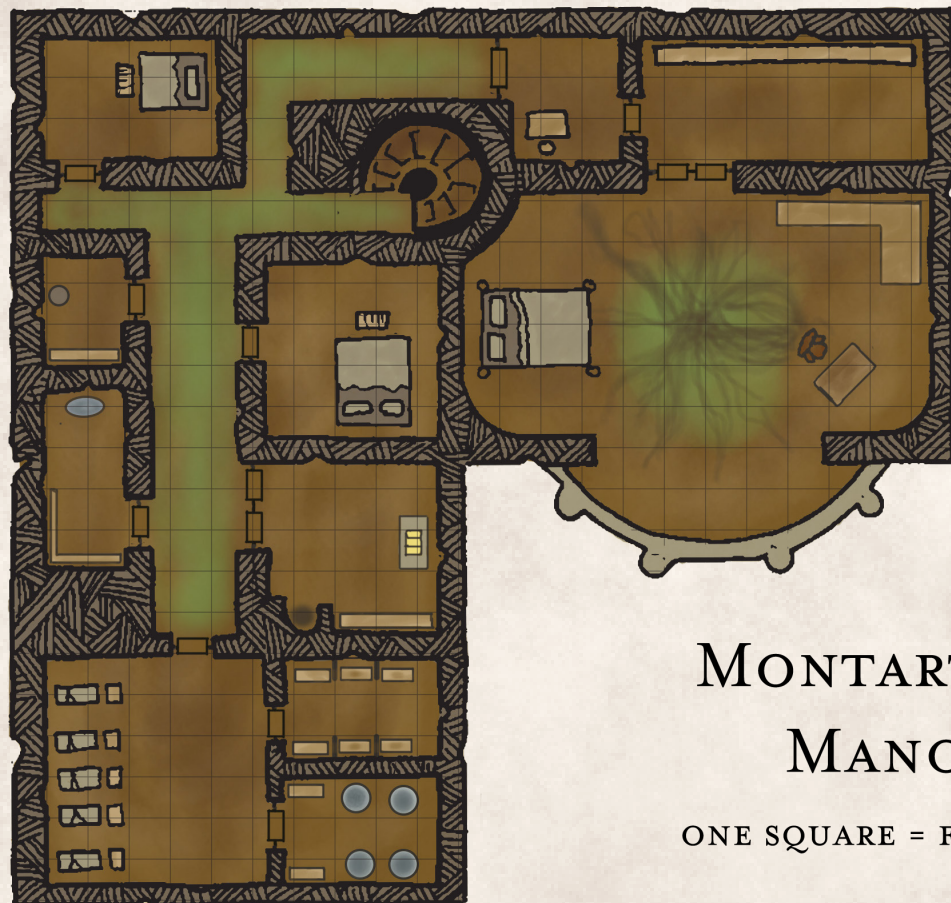
SECOND FLOOR



MONTARTHAS MANOR

ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET

APPENDIX: B
PLAYER'S MAP



MONTARTHAS
MANOR

ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET

**DID YOU AND YOUR GROUP OF
BRAVE ADVENTURERS ENJOY THE
HORRORS OF THE HAUNT?**

**CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINK TO
RATE IT.**

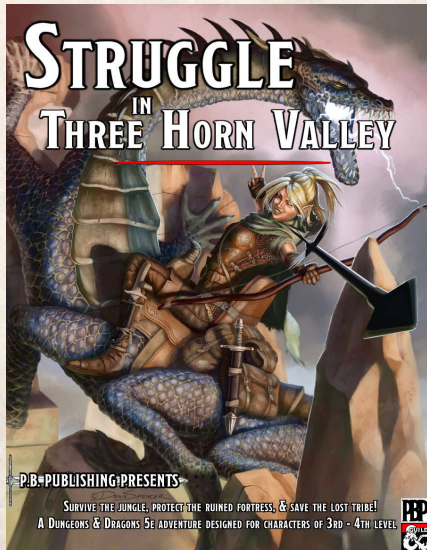
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“This was the most fun I’ve had running a module...”
“This is a gem. Pirates. Shipwrecks. Dinosaurs. Amazing maps to go with it all.”

<http://bit.ly/2nkORue>



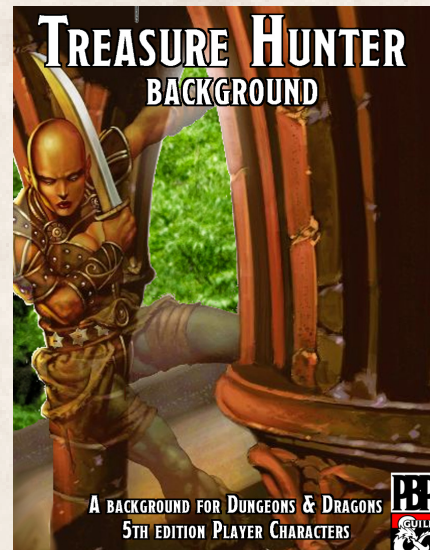
“In my opinion, this is the best take of a witch class for 5e...”

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“Nicely done! This is a great murder mystery that introduces a new Forgotten Realms town...”

<http://bit.ly/2nvtzsz>



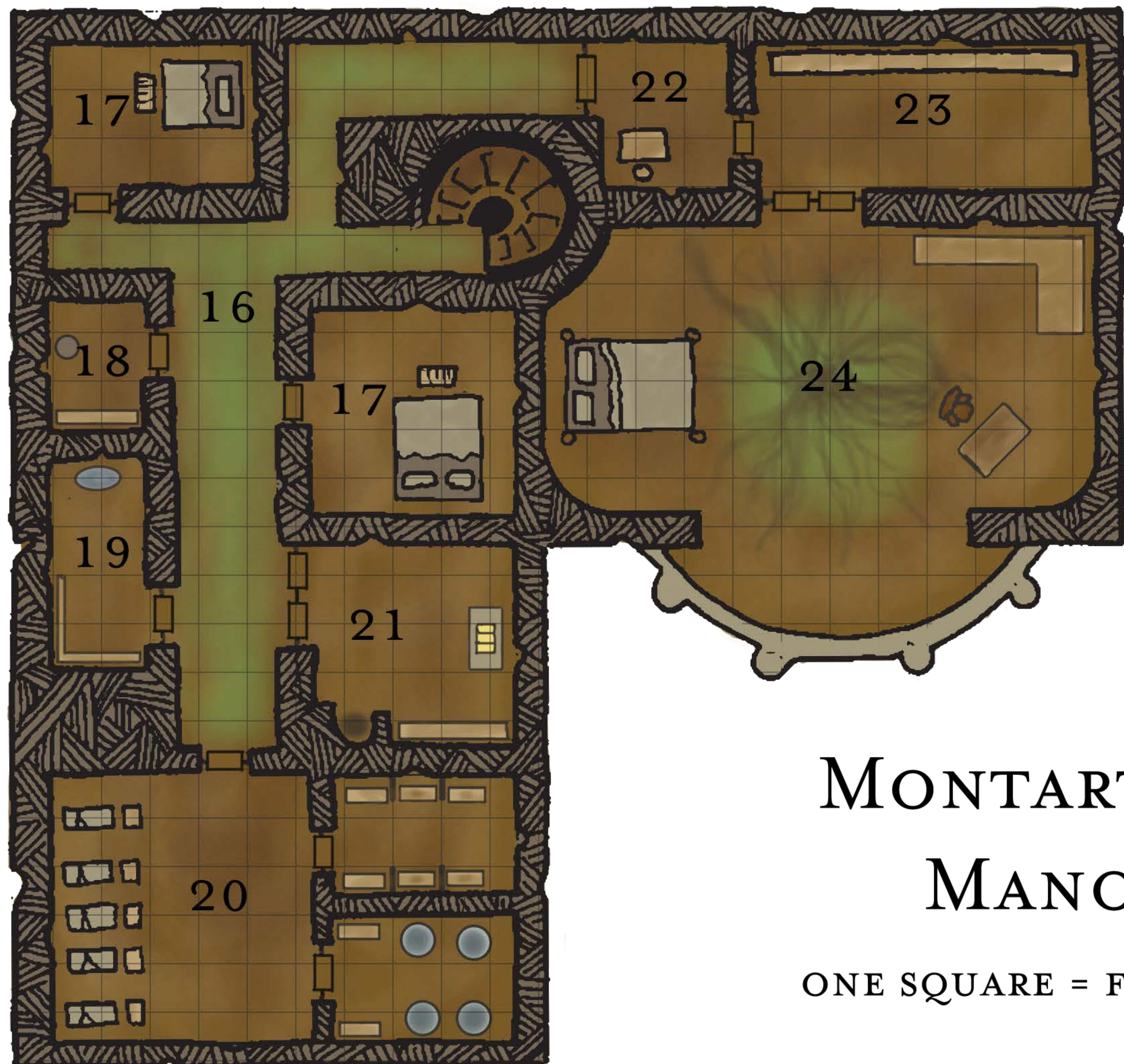
“A really flavorful background that does a great job of channeling the Indiana Jones archetype...”



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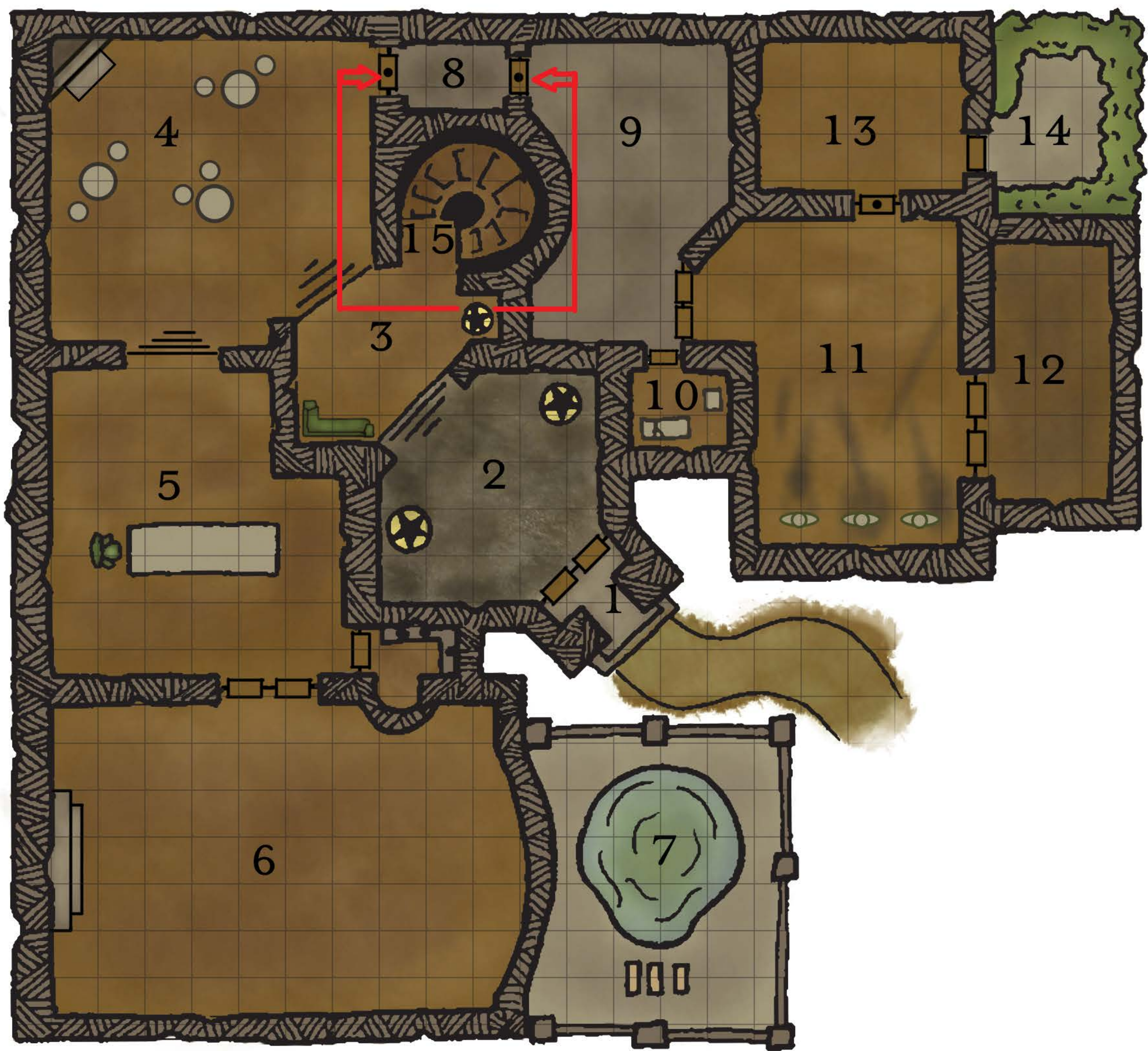
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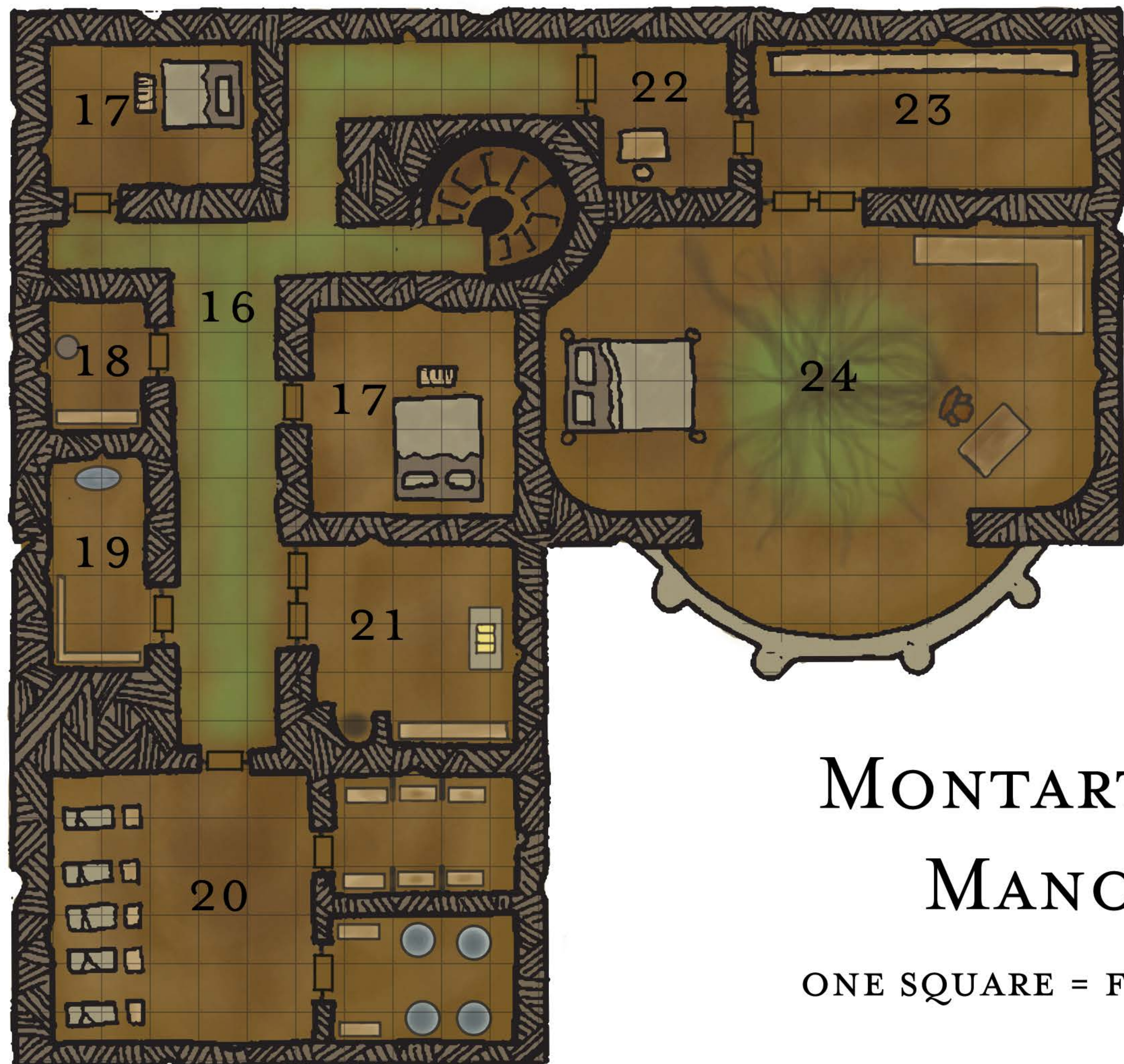
MONTARTHAS
MANOR

ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET

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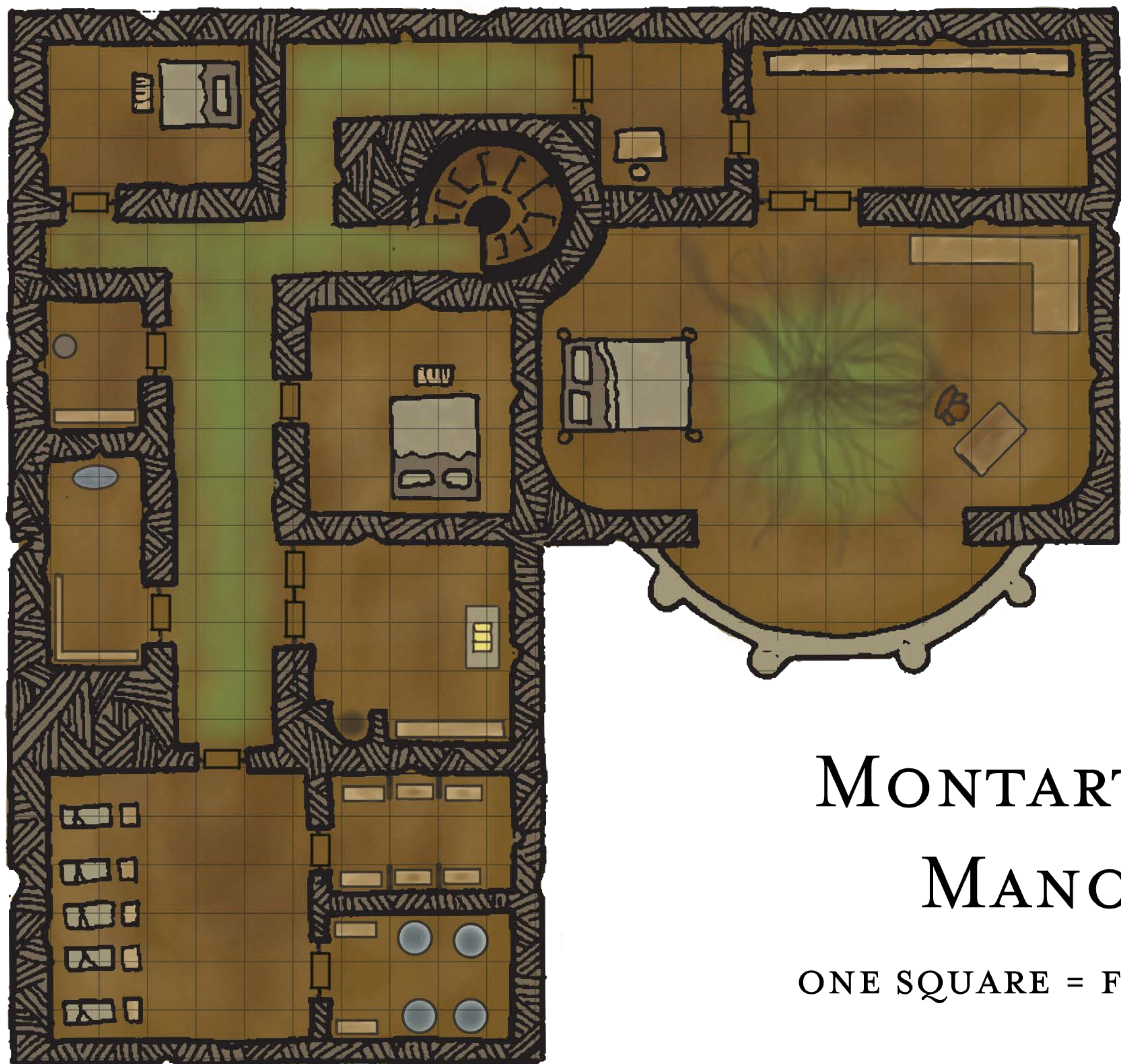


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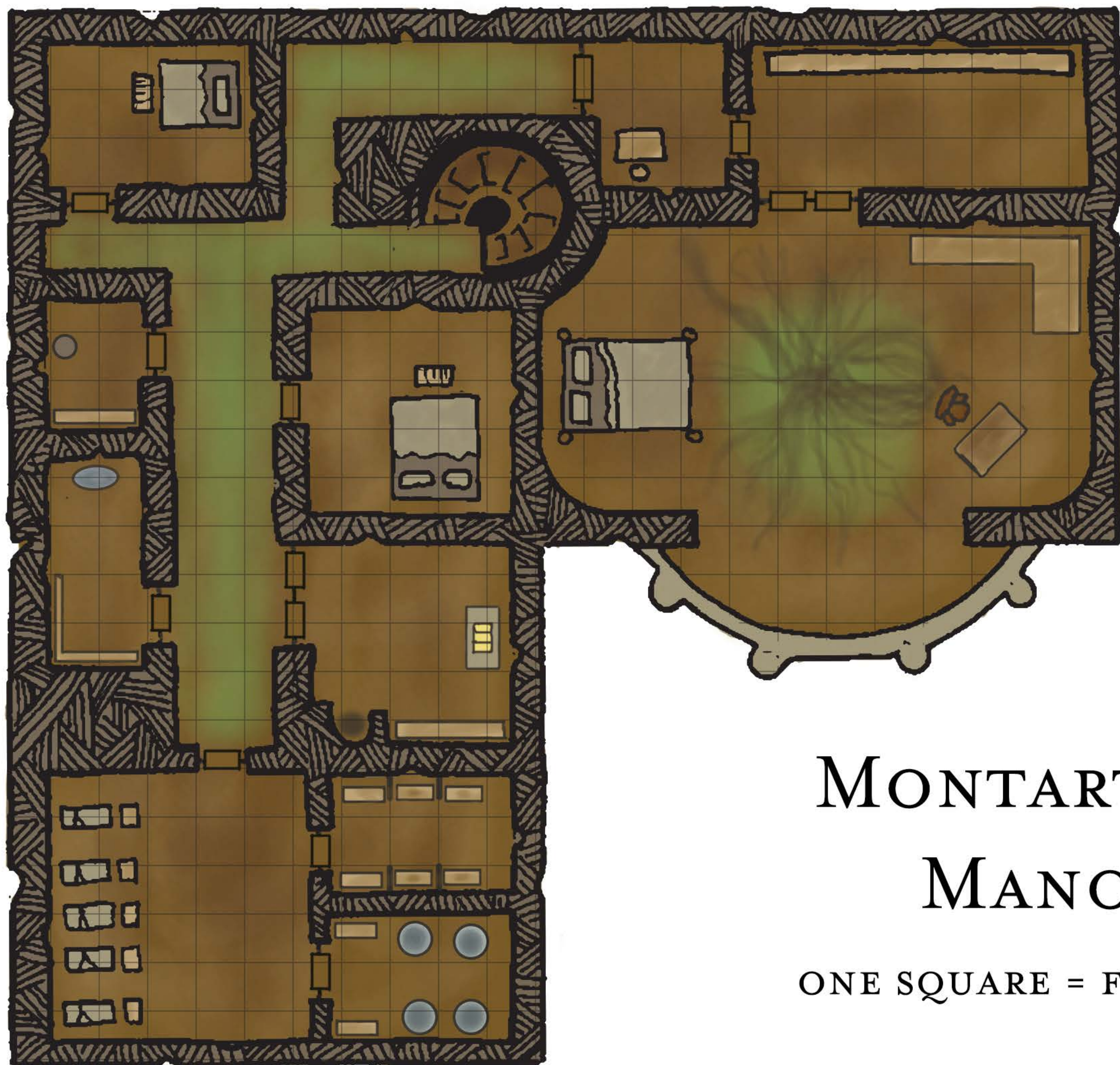


MONTARTHAS
MANOR

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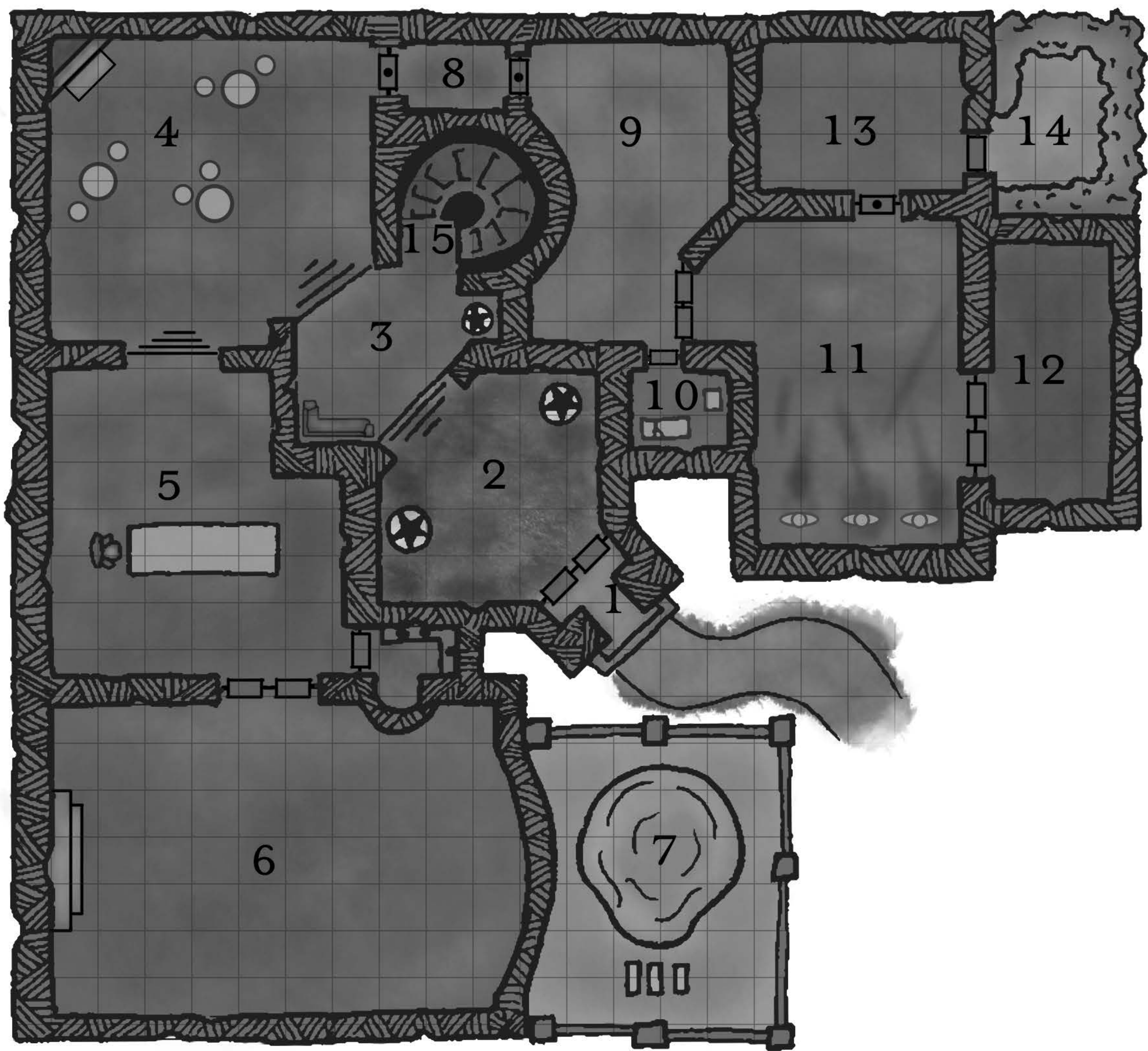


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MANOR
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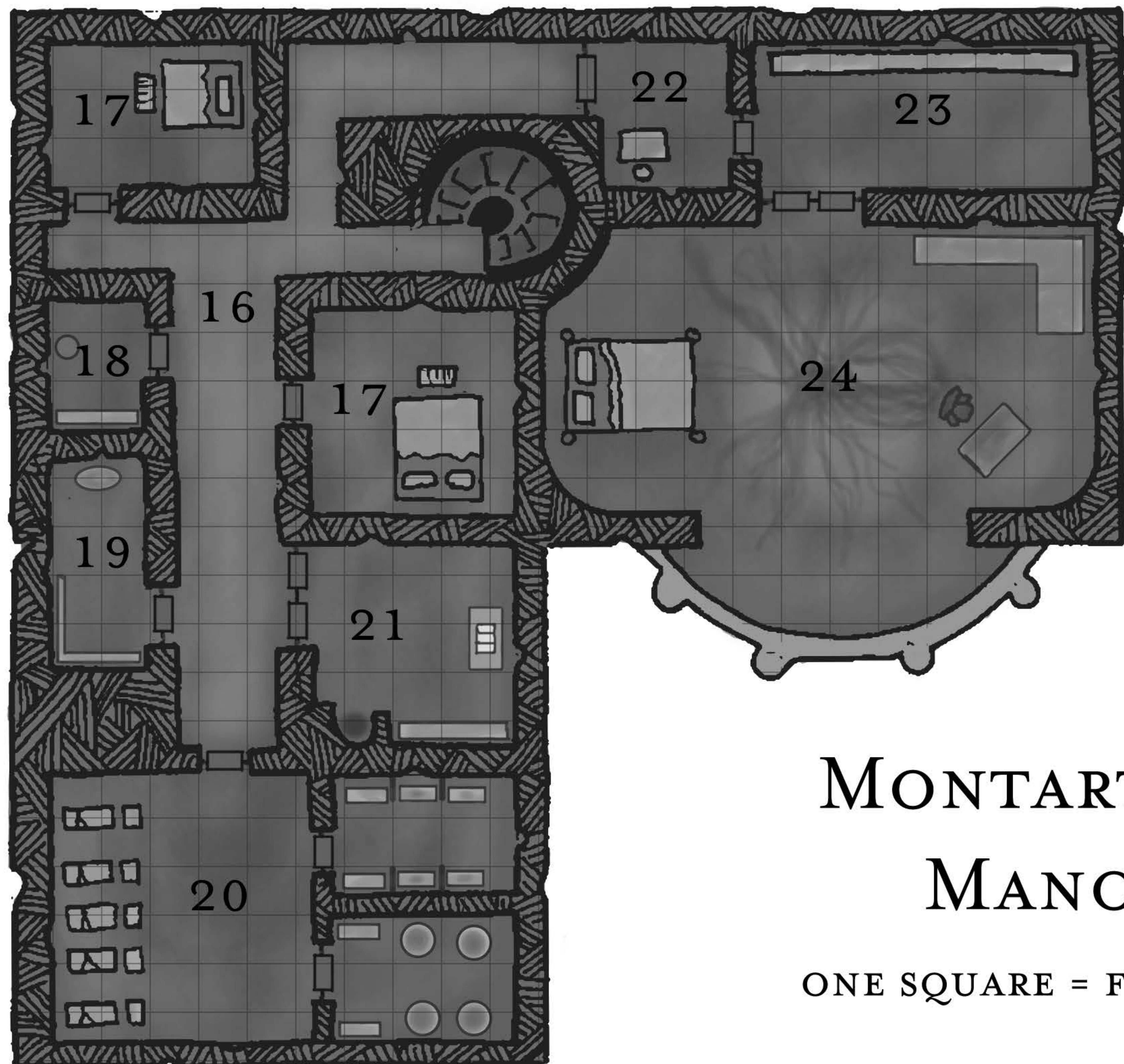


MONTARTHAS
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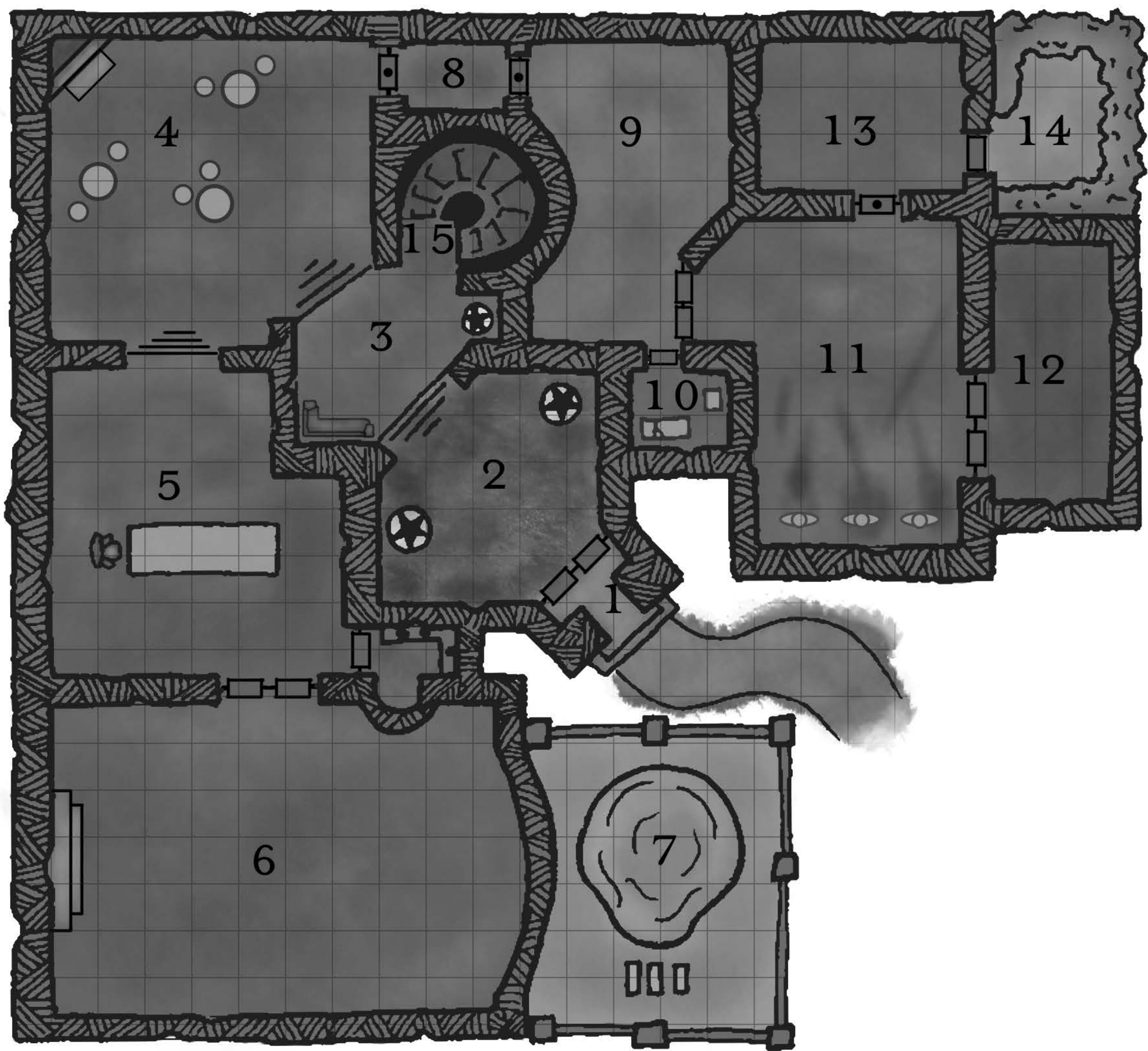
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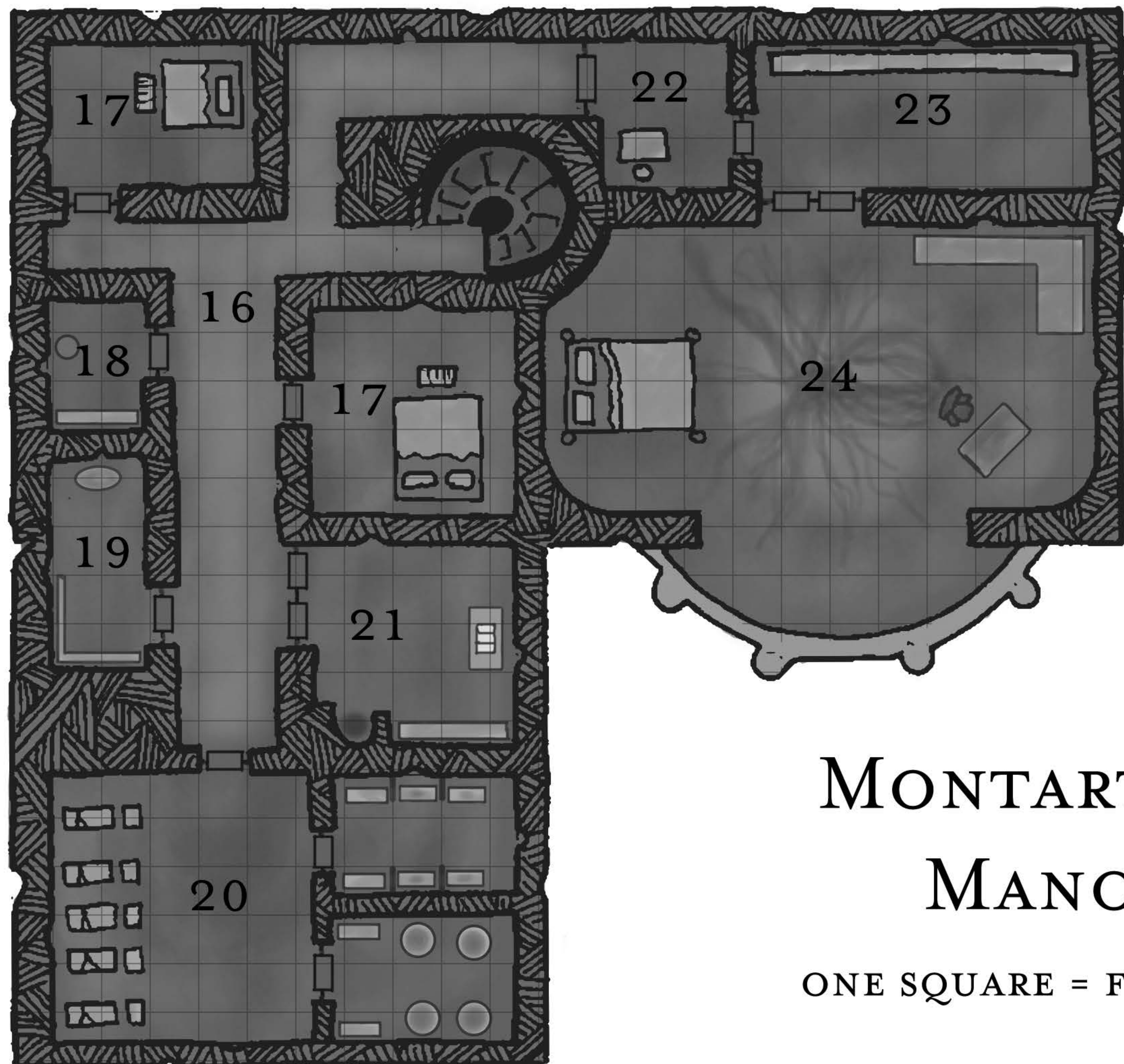
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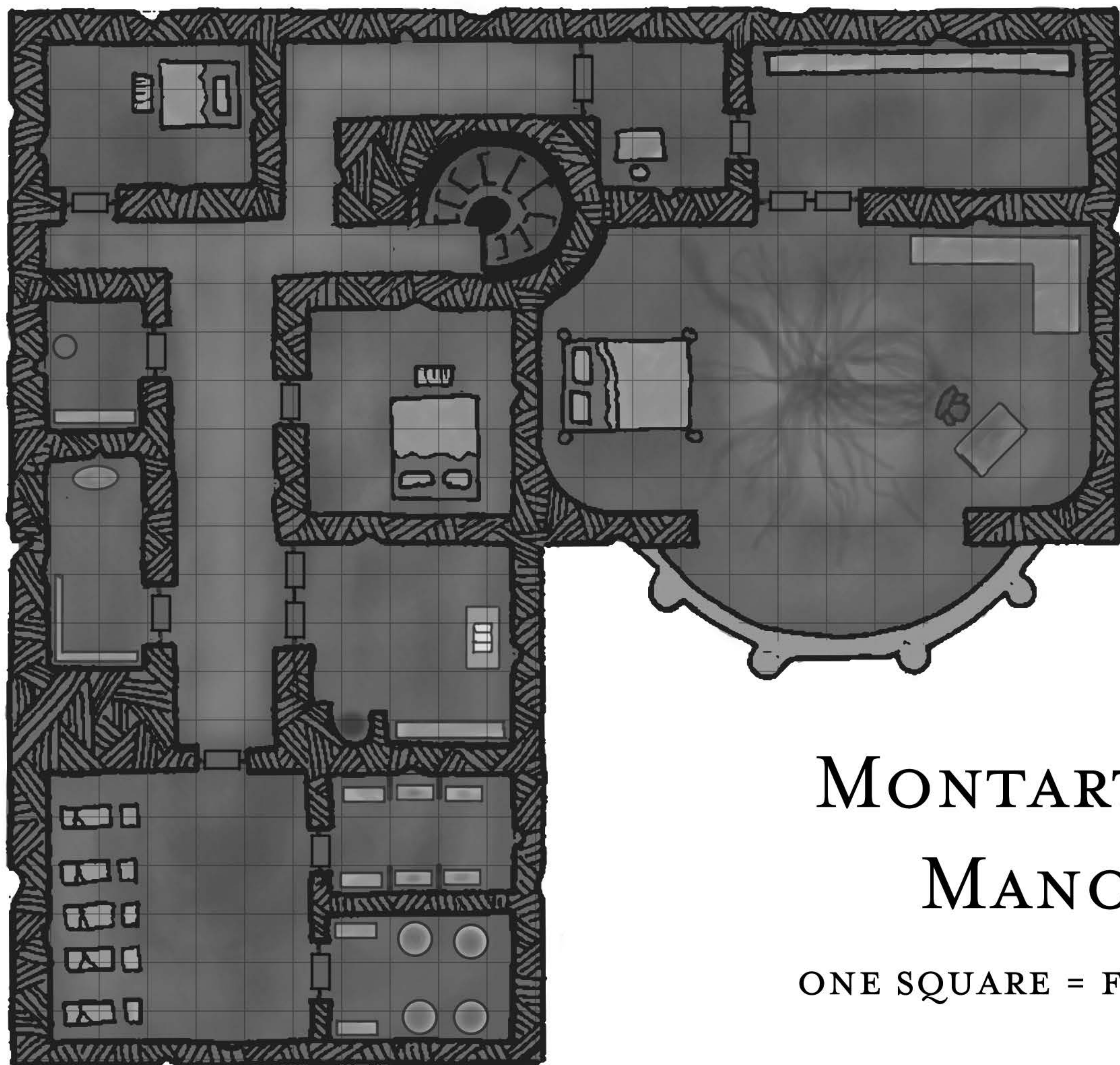
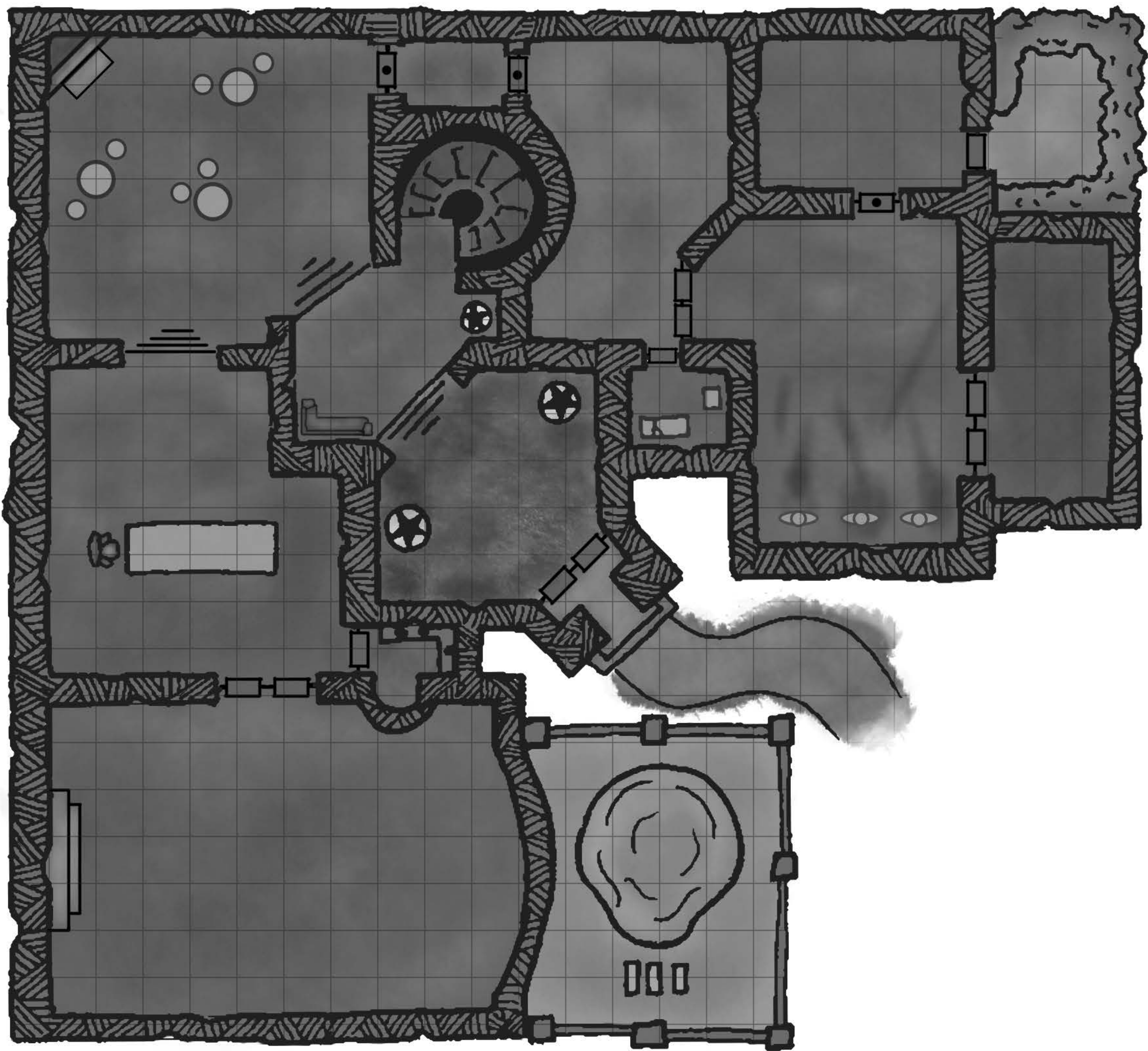


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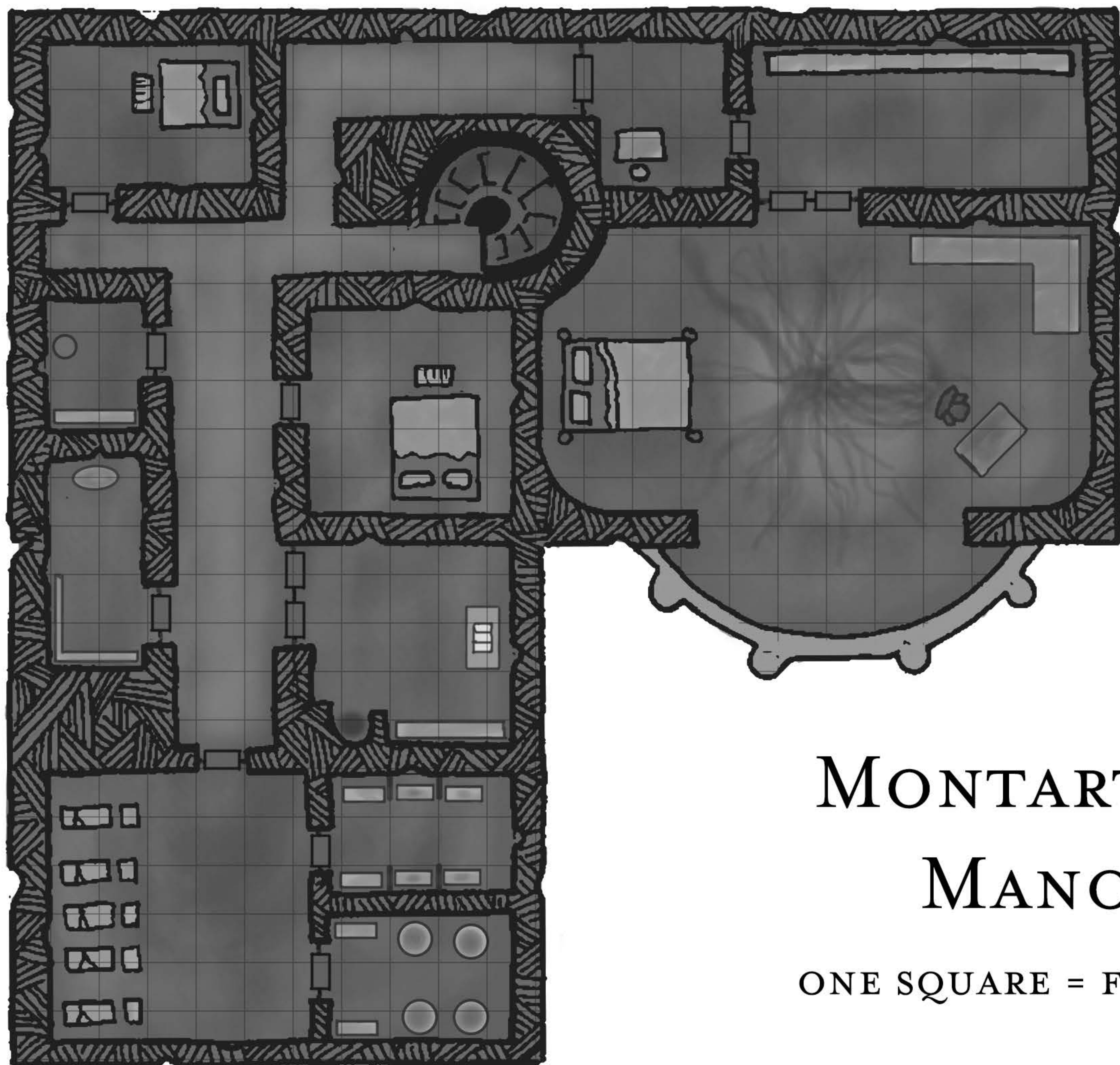
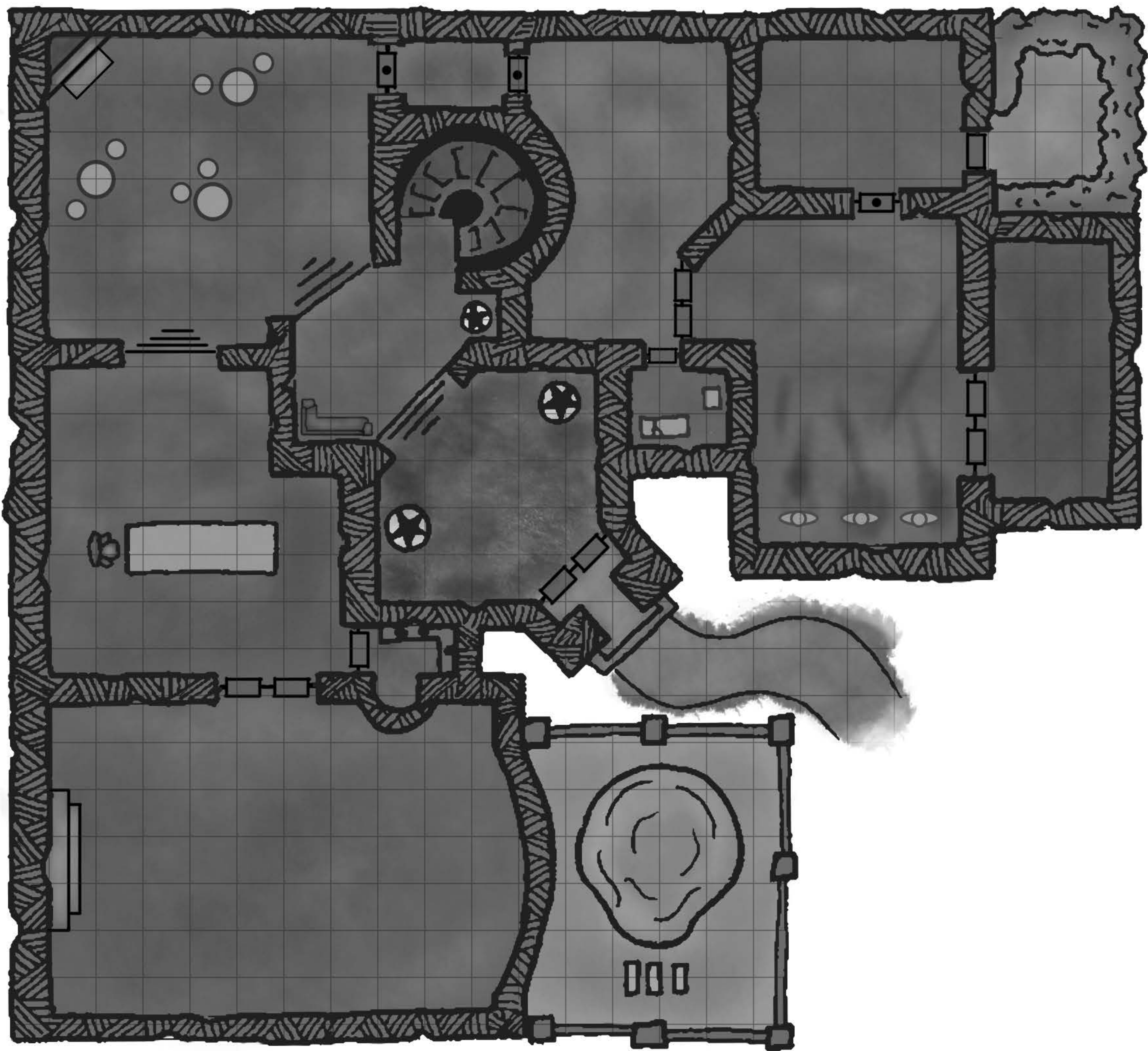


MONTARTHAS
MANOR

ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET



MONTARTHAS
MANOR
ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET



MONTARTHAS MANOR

ONE SQUARE = FIVE FEET



Unearthed Arcana: Three Pillars

An alternative way to award XP using exploration, social interaction, and combat.

Playtest Material

The material here is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by final game development and editing. They aren't officially part of the game and aren't permitted in D&D Adventurers League events.

If we decide to make this material official, it will be refined based on your feedback, and then it will appear in a D&D book.

Three pillars of adventuring make up the D&D game: exploration, social interaction, and combat. But when it comes to earning experience, the combat pillar often supports most of the game's

weight. With all three pillars in mind, Mike Mearls presents an alternative system for awarding experience points, offering a streamlined XP process based in equal part on defeating monsters, exploring dangerous sites to claim the magic and wealth found there, and interacting with NPCs to shape the flow of the campaign.

Back when we were designing fifth edition Dungeons & Dragons, we talked about the game's three pillars: exploration, social interaction, and combat. By thinking about social interaction and exploration as foundational aspects of D&D, we made sure we were always looking beyond combat when designing the game. Fighting easily draws the most attention in terms of rules and game balance, but the other two elements are just as important in making each game session exciting and unique.

This article presents an alternative way to award experience points (XP) by focusing on the three pillars. It also seeks to simplify XP tracking by incorporating elements inspired by the milestone system of awarding experience.

These variant rules use a different XP economy, in which the value of experience points is much different than it is in the standard game. Doing so allows for simpler math, with characters gaining one level for every 100 XP earned. Awards are all relative to a character's level, however, so the rate at which characters gain levels remains the same throughout the game (as compared to the default system, which has faster advancement in a few spots).

These rules use 100 XP as a baseline because doing so makes it easy to assess the benefit of an XP award. For example, earning 20 XP earns you 20 percent of a level, and so on. For DMs and players, the intent is to make it much easier to understand the risks and rewards in an adventure. One thing to keep in mind is that the advancement rate of these rules is different from that presented in the core game. However, that change is balanced out by giving the DM more control over progression.

Gaining Levels

Under this system, you gain a level each time you accumulate 100 XP. When you cross that threshold and increase your character's level, you reduce your current XP total by 100.

Dividing XP

Under this system, XP is not usually divided among party members. The award for an adventure is the same for all members of the party. If defeating a monster awards 10 XP, each member of the party gains 10 XP. If the party is exceptionally large, though, the notion of safety in numbers makes awards a little easier to earn. If there are more than six members of a party eligible to earn XP (counting both player characters and NPCs), halve all experience awards.

Earning Experience Points

You gain experience points through activities representing each of the three pillars of adventuring: exploration, social interaction, and combat. Each type of game play awards XP differently.

Exploration

You gain XP for recovering lost magic items, claiming hidden treasure caches, and exploring abandoned sites or places of power. Your character can gain experience points by retrieving a mighty weapon from a dragon's hoard, stealing a diamond from an evil baron, or uncovering the location of a lost temple of evil.

The value of a location or item compared to your level determines its XP value. Finding a treasure or exploring a location appropriate to your tier earns you 10 XP, plus an additional 10 XP for each tier above your current tier. You don't gain XP for exploration below your tier.

Items. Valuable treasures and magic items are assigned to tiers as follows:

Tier 1: A single item worth 100 gp or more, or a nonconsumable rare magic item

Tier 2: A single item worth 1,000 gp or more, or a nonconsumable very rare magic item

Tier 3: A single item worth 5,000 gp or more, or a nonconsumable legendary magic item

Tier 4: A single item worth 50,000 gp or more, or an artifact

Locations. Forgotten locations and sites of power aren't fitted to tiers by any hard and fast rule. Rather, a location's tier depends on its importance in your campaign. You can measure the discovery of a lost location, or the liberation of a place from the clutches of a villain or monster, by the scope of such an action's impact:

Tier 1: A location important to a small town or village

Tier 2: A location vital to a kingdom

Tier 3: A location important across a world

Tier 4: A location of cosmic importance

Social Interaction

You gain experience points for turning important NPCs into allies, aligning them with your cause or denying them as assets to your enemies. When you do so, the XP you gain are based on an NPC's power and influence.

You gain 10 XP for swaying an NPC appropriate to your tier, plus an additional 10 XP for each tier above your current one. You gain 5 XP for affecting an NPC one tier below you, but you gain no XP for NPCs of a lower tier than that.

NPCs are assigned to tiers as follows:

Tier 1: An NPC with influence over a small town or village, or the equivalent

Tier 2: An NPC with influence over a city or the equivalent

Tier 3: An NPC with influence over a kingdom, a continent, or the equivalent

Tier 4: An NPC (including a deity) with cosmic significance or influence across multiple worlds

Combat

You gain XP for defeating monsters in combat, whether by slaying

them or leaving them in a state in which they pose no threat. For example, you might force a demon back to the Abyss or imprison an undead horror in a sealed tomb.

The XP you gain for defeating a monster is determined by comparing the monster's challenge rating to your level. In most cases, you gain 5 XP per monster defeated. That award increases to 15 XP if a monster's challenge rating is twice your level or more. If its challenge rating is half your level or less, that award drops to 2 XP.

Focusing on Pillars

As a DM, if your campaign focuses on just one or two of the three pillars, you'll simply grant XP awards for those pillars. However, if you eliminate any pillars, you'll want to be sure to give the players plenty of opportunities to find success in challenges making use of the other pillars. Alternatively, you can consider increasing the XP awards for the pillars you do use. Increasing the reward of the two remaining pillars by 50 percent is a good way to account for losing a single pillar. If you use only one pillar, consider tripling its rewards.

You can read the rest of this Unearthed Arcana PDF [here](#).

To see the full treasure trove of Unearthed Arcana articles, covering new classes and feats, conversions of rules from previous editions, and much more, [visit the archive here](#).

Have a request for Unearthed Arcana? Follow [@mikemearls](#) on Twitter and let him know.

BACK TO TOP

Unearthed Arcana: Revised Class Options

This document provides revised versions of class material that appeared in previous installments of Unearthed Arcana: four subclasses for various classes, along with Eldritch Invocations for the warlock. This material was all popular, and the revisions to it were driven by feedback that thousands of you provided in surveys.

The subclasses are the druid's Circle of the Shepherd, the fighter's Cavalier, the paladin's Oath of Conquest, and the warlock's Celestial (formerly known as the Undying Light).

One of the main pieces of feedback we got about the Eldritch Invocations is that you didn't want them exclusive to particular Otherworldly Patron options, so we've opened them up to more warlocks, tweaked them, and cut the least popular ones.

This Is Playtest Material

The material here is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by final game development and editing. They aren't officially part of the game and aren't permitted in D&D Adventurers League events.

If we decide to make this material official, it will be refined based on your feedback, and then it will appear in a D&D book.

Druid: Circle of the Shepherd

Druids of the Circle of the Shepherd commune with the spirits of nature, especially the spirits of beasts and the fey, and call to those spirits for aid. These druids recognize that all living things play a role in the natural world, yet they focus on protecting animals and fey creatures that have difficulty defending themselves. Shepherds, as they are known, see such creatures as their charges. They ward off monsters that threaten them, rebuke hunters who kill more prey than necessary, and prevent civilization from encroaching on rare animal habitats and on sites sacred to the fey. Many of these druids are happiest far from cities and towns, content to spend their days in the company of animals and the fey creatures of the wilds.

Members of this circle become adventurers to oppose forces that threaten their charges or to

seek knowledge and power that will help them safeguard their charges better. Wherever these druids go, the spirits of the wilderness are with them.

Circle of the Shepherd Features

Druid Level	Feature
2nd	Spirit Totem, Speech of the Woods
6th	Mighty Summoner
10th	Guardian Spirit
14th	Faithful Summons

Speech of the Woods

At 2nd level, you gain the ability to converse with beasts and many fey.

You learn to speak, read, and write Sylvan. In addition, beasts can understand your speech, and you gain the ability to decipher their noises and motions. Most beasts lack the intelligence to convey or understand sophisticated concepts, but a friendly beast could relay what it has seen or heard in the recent past. This ability doesn't grant you any special friendship with beasts, though you can combine this ability with gifts to curry favor with them as you would with any nonplayer character.

Spirit Totem

Starting at 2nd level, you gain the ability to call forth nature spirits and use them to influence the world around you. As a bonus action, you can magically summon an incorporeal spirit to a point you can see within 60 feet of you. The spirit creates an aura in a 30-foot radius around that point. It counts as neither a creature nor an object, though it has the spectral appearance of the creature it represents.

As a bonus action, you can move the spirit up to 60 feet to a point you can see.

The spirit persists for 1 minute. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

The effect of the spirit's aura depends on the type of spirit you summon from the options below.

Bear Spirit. The bear spirit grants you and your allies its might and endurance. Each creature of your choice in the aura when the

spirit appears gains temporary hit points equal to 5 + your druid level. In addition, you and your allies gain advantage on Strength checks and Strength saving throws while in the aura.

Hawk Spirit. The hawk spirit is a consummate hunter, marking your enemies with its keen sight. When a creature makes an attack roll against a target in the spirit's aura, you can use your reaction to grant advantage to that attack roll.

Unicorn Spirit. The unicorn spirit lends its protection to those nearby. You and your allies gain advantage on all ability checks made to detect creatures in the spirit's aura. In addition, if you cast a spell with a spell slot that restores hit points to anyone inside or outside the aura, each creature of your choice in the aura also regains hit points equal to your druid level.

Mighty Summoner

At 6th level, you gain the ability to conjure forth powerful beasts and fey. Any beast or fey summoned or created by your spells gains two benefits:

- The creature appears with more hit points than normal: 2 extra hit points per Hit Die it has.
- The damage from its natural weapons is considered magical for the purpose of overcoming immunity and resistance to nonmagical attacks and damage.

Guardian Spirit

Beginning at 10th level, your Spirit Totem safeguards the beasts and fey that you call forth with your magic. When a beast or fey that you summoned or created with a spell ends its turn in your Spirit Totem aura, that creature regains a number of hit points equal to half your druid level.

Faithful Summons

Starting at 14th level, the nature spirits you commune with protect you when you are the most defenseless. If you are reduced to 0 hit points or are incapacitated against your will, you can immediately gain the benefits of *conjure animals* as if it were cast with a 9th-level spell slot. It summons four beasts of your choice that are challenge rating 2 or lower. The conjured beasts appear within 20 feet of you. If they receive no commands from you, they protect you from harm and attack your foes. The spell lasts

for 1 hour, requiring no concentration, or until you dismiss it (no action required).

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Fighter: Cavalier

The archetypal Cavalier excels at mounted combat. Usually born among the nobility and raised at court, a Cavalier is equally at home leading a cavalry charge or exchanging repartee at a state dinner. Cavaliers also learn how to guard those in their charge from harm, often serving as the protectors of their superiors and of the weak. Drawn to right wrongs or earn prestige, many of these fighters leave their lives of comfort to embark on glorious adventure.

Cavalier Features

Fighter Level	Feature
3rd	Bonus Proficiency, Born to the Saddle, Combat Superiority (d8s, 4 dice)
7th	Ferocious Charger, Combat Superiority (5 dice)
10th	Improved Combat Superiority (d10s)
15th	Relentless, Combat Superiority (6 dice)
18th	Improved Combat Superiority (d12s)

Bonus Proficiency

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in one of the following skills of your choice: Animal Handling, History, Insight, Performance, or Persuasion. Alternatively, you learn one language of your choice.

Born to the Saddle

Starting at 3rd level, your mastery as a rider becomes apparent. You have advantage on saving throws made to avoid falling off your mount. If you fall off your mount and descend no more than 10 feet, you can land on your feet if you're not incapacitated.

Finally, mounting or dismounting a creature costs you only 5 feet of movement, rather than half your speed.

Combat Superiority

At 3rd level, you gain a set of combat abilities, referred to as maneuvers, which are fueled by special dice called superiority dice.

Superiority Dice. You have four superiority dice, which are d8s. A superiority die is expended when you use it. You regain all your

expended superiority dice when you finish a short or long rest.

You gain another superiority die at 7th level and one more at 15th level.

Maneuvers. You spend your superiority dice on your maneuvers. You can use more than one maneuver per turn, but no more than one maneuver per attack.

You know the following maneuvers:

Control Mount. When you make a Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to influence a creature that you or an ally is riding, you can expend one superiority die, roll it, and add the number rolled to the check. You can do this before or after rolling the d20, but before applying the results of the check.

Precision Attack. When you make a weapon attack against a creature, you can expend one superiority die, roll it, and add it to the attack roll. You can use this ability before or after rolling the d20, but before any of the effects of the attack are applied.

Trip Attack. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can expend one superiority die to attempt to knock the target down. Roll the die, and add it to the attack's damage roll. If the target is Large or smaller, it must also succeed on a Strength saving throw (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Strength modifier) or be knocked prone.

Warding Maneuver. If you or a creature within 5 feet of you is hit by an attack, you can expend one superiority die as a reaction if you're wielding a weapon or a shield. Roll the die, and add the number rolled to the target's AC against that attack. If the attack still hits, the target has resistance against the attack's damage.

Ferocious Charger

At 7th level, you gain additional benefits when you use your Trip Attack maneuver. You can expend up to two superiority dice on it, adding both dice to the damage roll. When you spend two dice in this way, the target has disadvantage on its Strength saving throw to avoid being knocked prone.

Improved Combat Superiority

At 10th level, your superiority dice turn into d10s. At 18th level, they turn into d12s.

Relentless

Starting at 15th level, when you roll initiative and have no superiority dice remaining, you regain one superiority die.

Paladin: Oath of Conquest

The Oath of Conquest calls to paladins who seek glory in battle and the subjugation of their enemies. It isn't enough for these paladins to establish order. They must crush the forces of chaos. Sometimes called knight tyrants or iron mongers, those who swear this oath gather into grim orders that serve gods or philosophies of war and well-ordered might.

Some of these paladins go so far as to consort with the powers of the Nine Hells, valuing the rule of law over the balm of mercy. The archdevil Bel, warlord of Avernus, counts many of these paladins—called hell knights—as his most ardent supporters. Hell knights cover their armor with trophies taken from fallen enemies, a grim warning to any who dare oppose them and the decrees of their lords. These knights are often most fiercely resisted by other paladins of this oath, who believe that the hell knights have wandered too far into darkness.

Tenets of Conquest

A paladin who takes this oath has the tenets of conquest seared on the upper arm. A hell knight's oath appears in Infernal runes, a brutal reminder of vows to the Lords of Hell.

Douse the Flame of Hope. It is not enough to merely defeat an enemy in battle. Your victory must be so overwhelming that your enemies' will to fight is shattered forever. A blade can end a life. Fear can end an empire.

Rule with an Iron Fist. Once you have conquered, tolerate no dissent. Your word is law. Those who obey it shall be favored. Those who defy it shall be punished as an example to all who might follow.

Strength Above All. You shall rule until a stronger one arises. Then you must grow mightier and meet the challenge, or fall to your own ruin.

Oath of Conquest Features

Paladin Level	Feature
3rd	Oath Spells, Channel Divinity
7th	Aura of Conquest (10 ft.)
15th	Scornful Rebuke
18th	Aura of Conquest (30 ft.)
20th	Invincible Conqueror

Oath Spells

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed in the Oath of Conquest Spells table. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how oath spells work.

Oath of Conquest Spells

Paladin Level	Spells
3rd	<i>armor of Agathys, command</i>
5th	<i>hold person, spiritual weapon</i>
9th	<i>bestow curse, fear</i>
13th	<i>dominate beast, stoneskin</i>
17th	<i>cloudkill, dominate person</i>

Channel Divinity

When you take this oath at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options. See the Sacred Oath class feature for how Channel Divinity works.

Conquering Presence. You can use your Channel Divinity to exude a terrifying presence. As an action, you force each creature of your choice that you can see within 30 feet of you to make a Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature becomes frightened of you for 1 minute. The frightened creature can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Guided Strike. You can use your Channel Divinity to strike with supernatural accuracy. When you make an attack roll, you can use your Channel Divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the roll. You make this choice after you see the roll, but before the DM says whether the attack hits or misses.

Aura of Conquest

Starting at 7th level, you constantly emanate a menacing aura while you're not incapacitated. The aura includes your space, extends 10 feet from you in every direction, and is blocked by total cover.

If a creature is frightened of you, its speed is reduced to 0 while in the aura, and that creature takes psychic damage equal to half your paladin level if it starts its turn there.

At 18th level, the range of this aura increases to 30 feet.

Scornful Rebuke

Starting at 15th level, those who dare to strike you are psychically punished for their audacity. Whenever a creature hits you with an attack, that creature takes psychic damage equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 0) if you're not incapacitated.

Invincible Conqueror

At 20th level, you gain the ability to harness extraordinary martial prowess. As an action, you can magically become an avatar of conquest, gaining the following benefits for 1 minute:

- You have resistance to all damage.
- When you take the Attack action on your turn, you can make one additional attack as part of that action.
- Your melee weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20 on the d20.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Warlock: The Celestial

Your patron is a powerful being of the Upper Planes. You have bound yourself to an ancient empyrean, solar, ki-rin, or unicorn or to another entity that resides in the planes of everlasting bliss. Your pact with that being allows you to experience the barest touch of the holy light that illuminates the multiverse.

Being connected to such power can cause changes in your behavior and beliefs. You might find yourself driven to annihilate the undead, to defeat fiends, and to protect the innocent. At times, your heart might also be filled with a longing for the celestial realm of your patron, a desire to wander that paradise for the rest of your days. But you know that your mission is among mortals for now and that your pact binds you to bring light to the dark places of the world.

Celestial Features

Warlock Level	Feature
1st	Expanded Spell List, Bonus Cantrips, Healing Light
6th	Radiant Soul
10th	Celestial Resilience
14th	Searing Vengeance

Expanded Spell List

The Celestial lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

Celestial Expanded Spells

Spell Level	Spells
1st	<i>burning hands, cure wounds</i>
2nd	<i>flaming sphere, lesser restoration</i>
3rd	<i>daylight, revivify</i>
4th	<i>guardian of faith, wall of fire</i>
5th	<i>flame strike, greater restoration</i>

Bonus Cantrips

At 1st level, you learn the *sacred flame* and *light* cantrips. They count as warlock cantrips for you, but they don't count against your number of cantrips known.

Healing Light

At 1st level, you gain the ability to channel celestial energy to heal wounds. You have a pool of d6s that you spend to fuel this healing. The number of dice in the pool equals 1 + your warlock level.

As a bonus action, you can touch a creature and heal it, spending dice from the pool. The maximum number of dice you can spend at once equals your Charisma modifier (minimum of one die). Roll the dice you spend, add them together, and restore a number of hit points equal to the total.

Your pool regains all expended dice when you finish a long rest.

Radiant Soul

Starting at 6th level, your link to the Celestial allows you to serve as a conduit for radiant energy. You have resistance to radiant damage, and when you cast a spell that deals radiant or fire damage, you add your Charisma modifier to that damage against one target of your choice.

Celestial Resilience

Starting at 10th level, you gain temporary hit points whenever you finish a short or long rest. These temporary hit points equal your warlock level + your Charisma modifier. Additionally, choose up to five creatures you can see at the end of the rest. Those creatures each gain temporary hit points equal to half your warlock level + your Charisma modifier.

Searing Vengeance

Starting at 14th level, the radiant energy you channel allows you to overcome grievous injuries. When you have to make a death saving throw at the start of your turn, you can instead spring back to your feet with a burst of radiant energy. You regain hit points equal to half your hit point maximum, and then you stand up, if you so choose. Each creature of your choice that is within 30 feet of you takes radiant damage equal to 2d8 + your Charisma modifier, and it is blinded until the end of the current turn.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Warlock: Eldritch Invocations

At 2nd level, a warlock gains the Eldritch Invocations feature. Here are new options for that feature, in addition to those in the *Player's Handbook*.

If an eldritch invocation has a prerequisite, you must meet it to learn the invocation. You can learn the invocation at the same time that you meet its prerequisite. A level prerequisite refers to your level in this class.

Aspect of the Moon

Prerequisite: Pact of the Tome feature

You no longer need to sleep and can't be forced to sleep by any means. To gain the benefits of a long rest, you can spend all 8 hours doing light activity, such as reading your Book of Shadows and keeping watch.

Cloak of Flies

Prerequisite: 5th level

As a bonus action, you can surround yourself with a magical aura that looks like buzzing flies. The aura includes your space, extends 5 feet from you in every direction, and is blocked by total cover. It lasts until you're incapacitated or you dismiss it with a bonus action.

The aura grants you advantage on Charisma (Intimidation) checks but disadvantage on all other Charisma checks. Any other creature that starts its turn in the aura takes poison damage equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum of 0 damage).

Once you use this invocation, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Eldritch Smite

Prerequisite: 5th level, Pact of the Blade feature

Once per turn when you hit a creature with your pact weapon, you can expend a warlock spell slot to deal an extra 1d8 force damage to the target, plus another 1d8 per level of the spell slot. If the target takes any of this damage, you can knock the target prone if it is Huge or smaller.

Frost Lance

Prerequisite: eldritch blast cantrip

Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with your *eldritch blast*, you can reduce that creature's speed by 10 feet until the end of your next turn.

Ghostly Gaze

Prerequisite: 7th level

As an action, you gain the ability to see through solid objects to a range of 30 feet. Within that range, you have darkvision if you don't already have it. This special sight lasts until the end of the current turn. During that time, you perceive objects as ghostly, transparent images.

Once you use this invocation, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Gift of the Depths

Prerequisite: 5th level

You can breathe underwater, and you gain a swimming speed equal to your walking speed.

You can also cast *water breathing* without expending a spell slot. Once you cast it using this invocation, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

Gift of the Ever-Living Ones

Prerequisite: Pact of the Chain feature

Whenever you regain hit points while your familiar is within 100 feet of you, treat any dice rolled to determine the hit points you regain as having rolled their maximum value for you.

Grasp of Hadar

Prerequisite: eldritch blast cantrip

Once on each of your turns when you hit a creature with your *eldritch blast* cantrip, you can move that creature in a straight line 10 feet closer to yourself.

Improved Pact Weapon

Prerequisite: Pact of the Blade feature

You can use any weapon you summon with your Pact of the Blade feature as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells.

In addition, the weapon counts as a magic weapon with a +1 bonus to its attack and damage rolls, unless it is already a magic weapon that you transformed into your pact weapon.

Kiss of Mephistopheles

Prerequisite: 5th level, eldritch blast cantrip

When you hit a creature with your *eldritch blast*, you can cast *fireball* as a bonus action using a warlock spell slot. The spell must be centered on the creature you hit with *eldritch blast*.

Maddening Hex

Prerequisite: 5th level

As a bonus action, you cause a psychic disturbance around the target cursed by your *hex* spell or by a warlock feature of yours, such as Hexblade's Curse and Sign of Ill Omen. When you do so, you deal psychic damage to the target and each creature of your choice within 5 feet of it. The psychic damage equals your Charisma modifier (minimum of 0 damage).

Relentless Hex

Prerequisite: 7th level

Your curse creates a temporary bond between you and your target. As a bonus action, you can magically teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space you can see within 5 feet of the target cursed by your *hex* spell or by a warlock feature of yours, such as Hexblade's Curse and Sign of Ill Omen. To teleport in this way, you must be able to see the cursed target.

Shroud of Shadow

Prerequisite: 15th level

You can cast *invisibility* at will, without expending a spell slot.

Tomb of Levistus

Prerequisite: 5th level

As a reaction when you take damage, you can entomb yourself in ice, which melts away at the end of your next turn. You gain 10 temporary hit points per warlock level, which take as much of the triggering damage as possible. You also gain

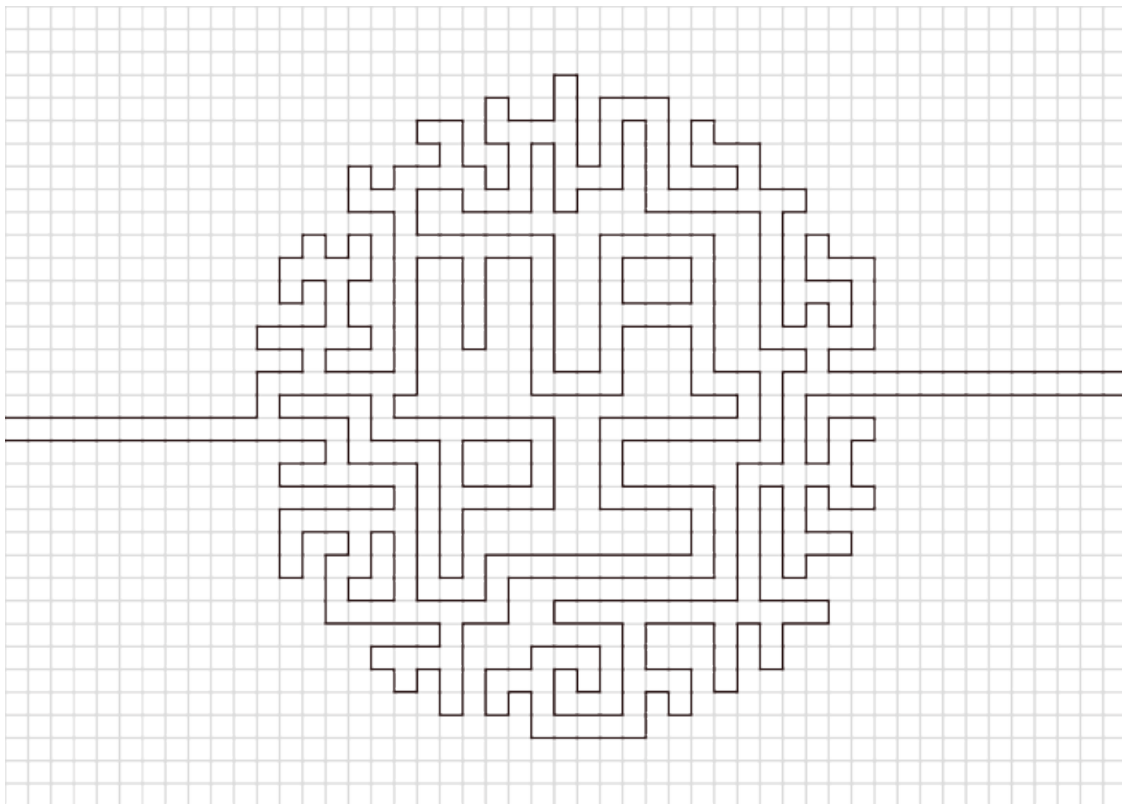
vulnerability to fire damage, your speed is reduced to 0, and you are incapacitated. These effects all end when the ice melts.

Once you use this invocation, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Trickster's Escape

Prerequisite: 7th level

You can cast *freedom of movement* once on yourself without expending a spell slot. You regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest.



Maps of the Month

An indispensable resource for your travels into
Chult!

Last issue, we offered a selection of maps for players looking to board ships and head off to distant exotic locales. With the release of *Tomb of Annihilation* imminent, we're offering further maps geared toward exotic travels—as well as an initial selection from the adventure itself (both tagged and untagged versions, when available)!

Tomb of Annihilation

Port Nyanzaru



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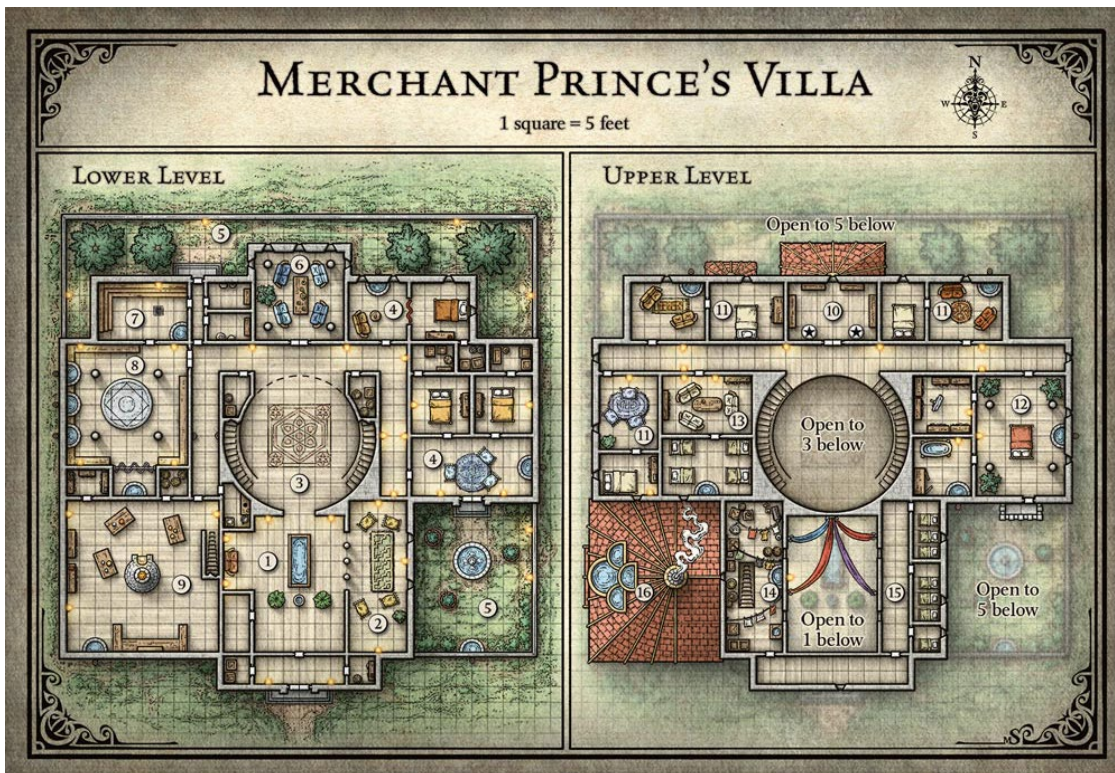
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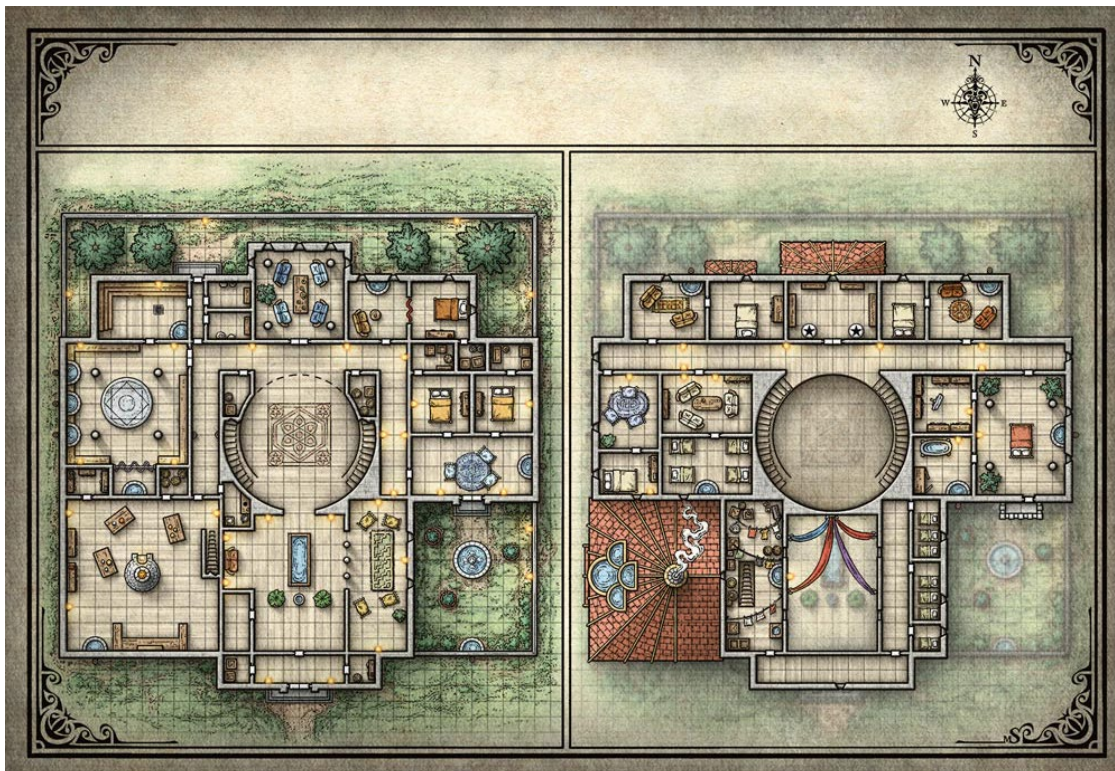
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Merchant Prince's Villa



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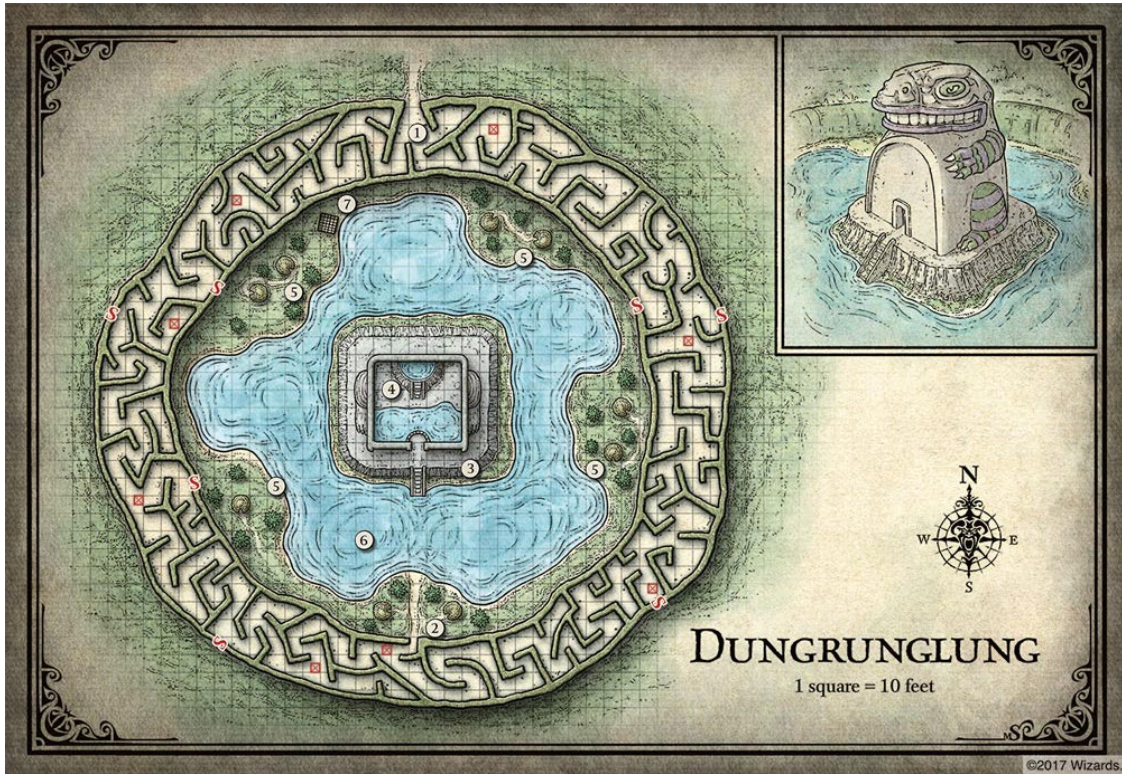
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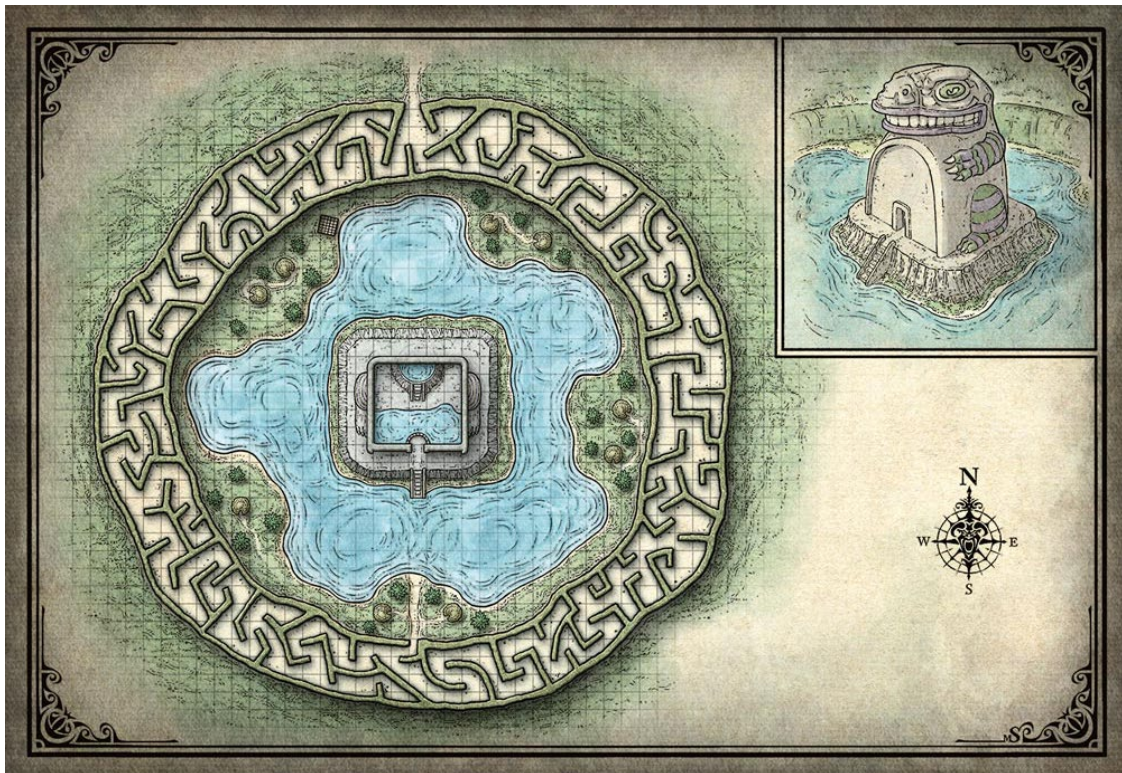
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Dungrunglung



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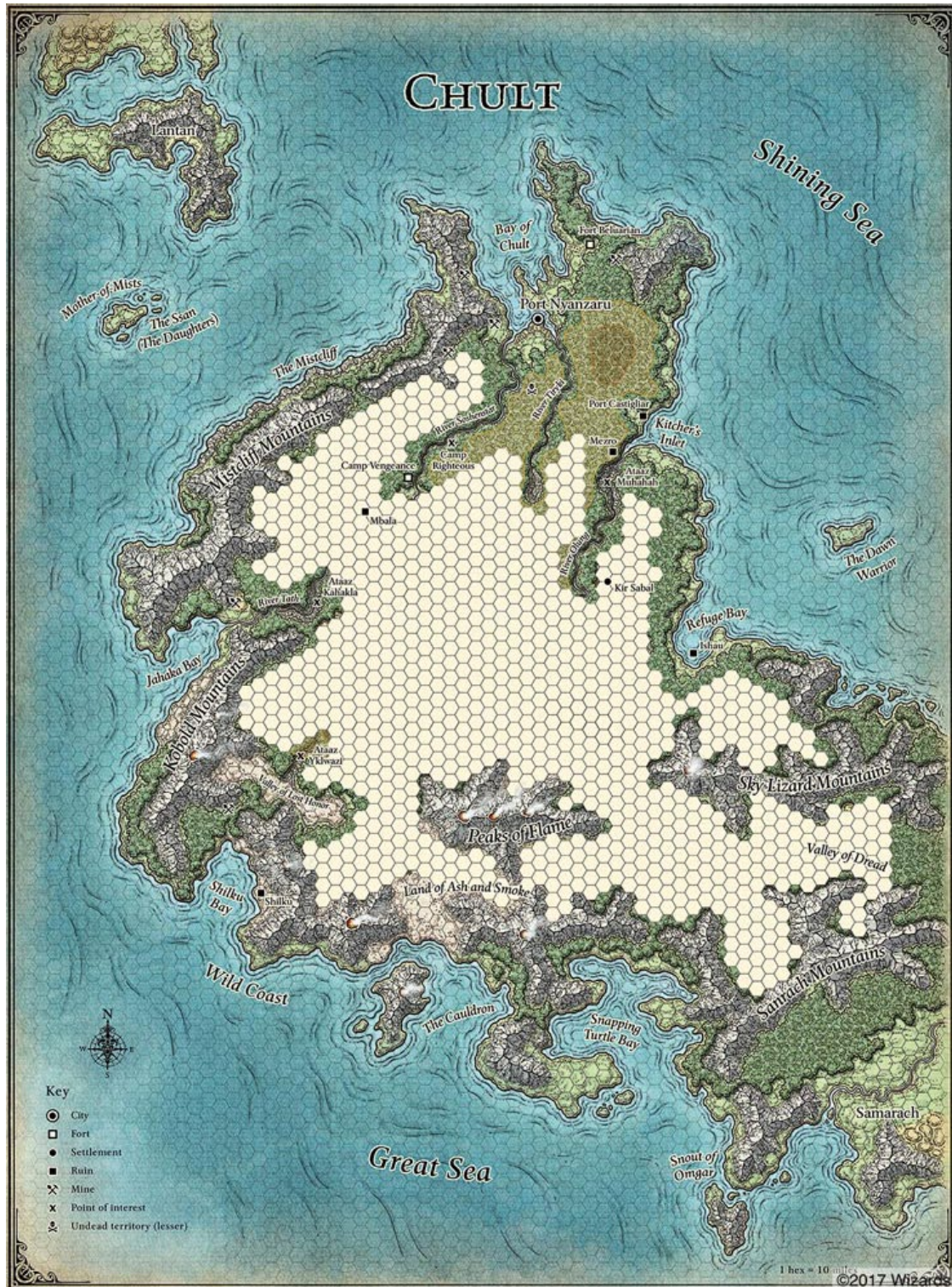
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Player's Map of Chult



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Additional Maps

A Scared Space



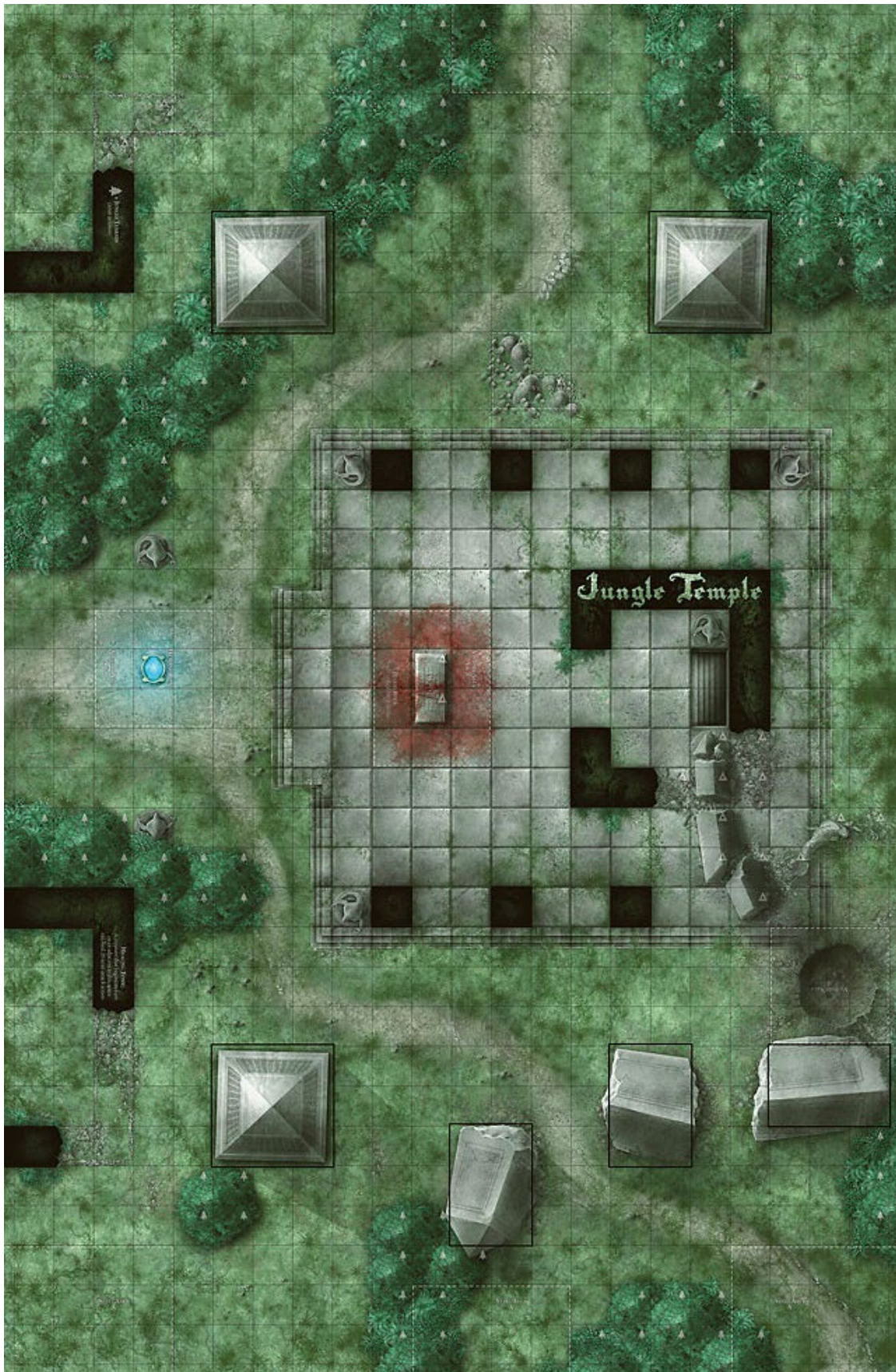
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Raider Encampment



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Jungle Temple



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Digital Maps

Please note that *Tomb of Annihilation* can soon be found at **Fantasy**

Grounds and on the **Roll20** virtual tabletop. Look for the adventure to appear there in the coming days.

Cartographers

And as always, our appreciation goes out to cartographers **Mike Schley**, **Jason A. Engle**, and **Lee Moyer**. To discover more of their work, please visit their websites.

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Streaming Highlights

Force Grey struggles to get some sleep, Shelly Mazzanoble drops some upcoming freebie hints, and Maze Arcana doubles our fun.



Force Grey: Lost City of Omu



Pity the Force Grey party! This issue of Dragon+ should have scared the wits out of you when it comes to what's lurking in the jungles of Chult, but these pioneers are already stumbling headlong into its dangers, as Force Grey Season 2 gets in early on the latest D&D storyline, Tomb of Annihilation. Even an overnight rest isn't assured in these climes, with wandering undead just one of the possible entities that will shamble by in the night. Will Joe Manganiello, Deborah Ann Woll, Brian Posehn, Utkarsh Ambudkar and Dylan Sprouse come out of their burrow (the benefits of a mole form character) before dawn? Join Dungeon Master Matthew Mercer on this Stream of Annihilation to find out.

[Watch on Twitch](#)

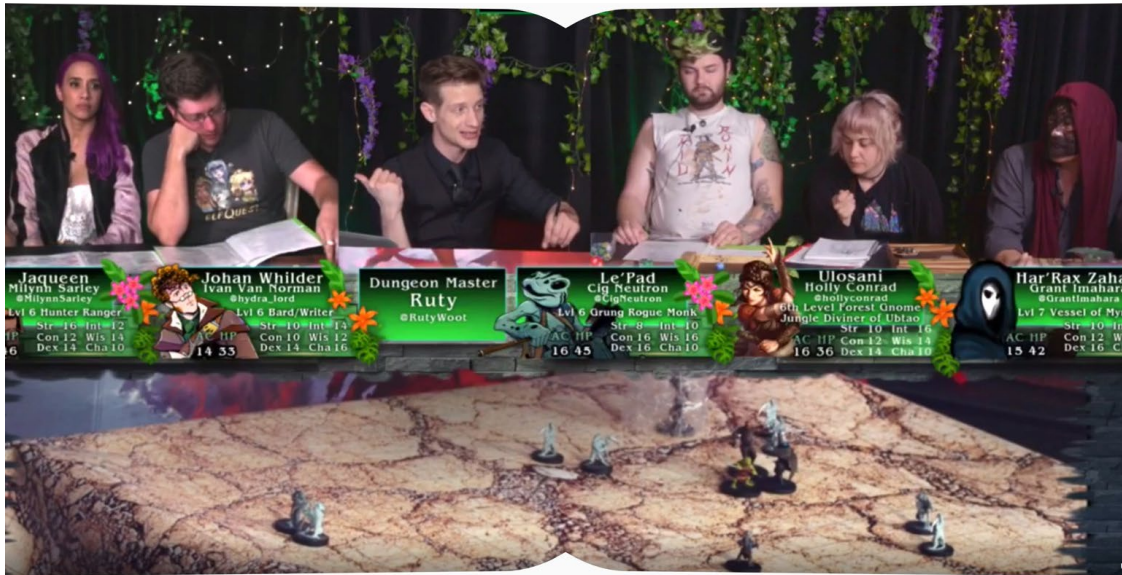
Dragon Talk



Lysa Chen calls into the [Dragon Talk](#) show to chat about her work with the Dungeon Master's Guild Adept Program, which will see some very special writers creating content for the DMs Guild. Join eclipse survivors Greg Tito and Shelly Mazzanoble as they ignore the fact that the cameras are running and talk about everything D&D that's important right now. Including some sweet teas about upcoming things in this very publication...

[Watch on Twitch](#)

Maze Arcana



Maze Arcana's *Fury's Reach* campaign offers double the fun for twice the enjoyment, as two groups in a shared timeline chase the same prize. DMs Ruty Rutenberg and Satine Phoenix rule the roost over their celebrity friends, as this Stream of Annihilation also gets the bladed implements out to work its way into the jungles of Chult. Like a proud parent, we're definitely not allowed to have a favorite (even if one of the games does feature a grung character called Le'Pad Cig Neutron).

[Watch on Twitch](#)

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Comic: Frost Giant's Fury: Part 4

From wombs of heroism to longshots in the war against the frost giants, our heroes' resolve is tested in Part 4 of IDW's comic!

This all-new story from IDW ties into the *Storm King's Thunder* event running across the whole Dungeons & Dragons range. **Part four** sees Minsc and the party regroup in the icy wastes following a frustrating encounter with the frost giants, which dips their spirits and has them reaching for a longshot. Thankfully, longshots are their specialty.

The regular cover for *Frost Giant's Fury Part 4*, created by Max Dunbar, shows the benefit of stealth when ice giants are approaching. Nelson Daniel's variant subscriber cover, meanwhile, brings the excitement of the party's avian plan of action to life. Should you find yourself in a comic shop, we'd also recommend checking out Chris Rahn's special retail cover, which features a heroic pose in a sweeping vista.

As usual, Minsc—the do-gooder with a heart of gold, brain of lead, and hamster of pronounced wisdom—features heavily! He's just one member of the party that has already fought its way through the hit *Legends of Baldur's Gate* and *Shadows of the Vampire* comic-book series.



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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS FROST GIANT'S FURY



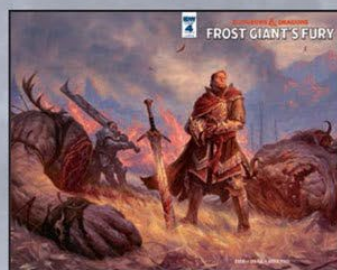
Written by **Jim Zub** Art by **Netho Diaz** Inks by **Glauber Matos**
 Letters by **Neil Uyetake** Colors by **Thiago Ribeiro**
 Assistant Edits by **Chase W. Marotz** Edits by **David Hedgecock** Publisher **Ted Adams**



REGULAR COVER
art by Max Dunbar
colors by John-Paul Bove



SUBSCRIPTION COVER
art by Nelson Daniel



RETAILER INCENTIVE COVER
art by Chris Rahn

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You can now add these legendary comic-book adventurers to your own D&D games. Ranger Minsc, rogues Krydle and Shandie,

sorcerer Delina and cleric Nerys are all ready to play thanks to our exclusive fifth edition character sheets. Simply click the button below to download the PDF containing all five characters.

[DOWNLOAD PDF](#)

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DELINA

CHARACTER NAME

6th-Level Sorcerer
LEVEL & CLASS

Moon Elf
RACE

PLAYER NAME

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Chaotic Good
ALIGNMENT

Noble
BACKGROUND



STRENGTH
9
0

DEXTERITY
16
+3

CONSTITUTION
15
+2

INTELLIGENCE
15
+2

WISDOM
13
+1

CHARISMA
17
+3

3 INSPIRATION

+3 PROFICIENCY BONUS

SAVING THROWS

- Strength
- Dexterity
- +5** Constitution
- Intelligence
- Wisdom
- +6** Charisma

SKILLS

- +6** Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- +5** Arcana (Int)
- Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- +5** History (Int)
- Insight (Wis)
- Intimidation (Cha)
- Investigation (Int)
- Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- +6** Performance (Cha)
- +6** Persuasion (Cha)
- Religion (Int)
- Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- +6** Stealth (Dex)
- Survival (Wis)

11 PASSIVE PERCEPTION

15 ARMOR CLASS **34** MAX HP TEMP HP

CURRENT HIT POINTS

6 HIT DICE

d6 _____
d8 _____
d10 _____
d12 _____

+3 INITIATIVE

30 FT. SPEED

SUCCESSES ○○○○
FAILURES ○○○○

DEATH SAVES

VISION

NAME	ATTACK	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO	USED
Daggers	+6	1d4 + 4	20/60		
Spell Save DC = 14 Spell Attack Modifier = 6					
Cantrips: Dancing Lights, Fire Bolt, Light, Shocking Grasp, Minor Illusion					
1st Level: Burning Hands, Color Spray, Fog Cloud, Magic Missile, Thunderwave					
2nd Level: Hold Person, Invisibility, Levitate					
3rd Level: Lightning Bolt, Slow, Clairvoyance					

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

Socerous Origins - Wild Magic

Font of Magic - Flexible Casting - convert spell slots to sorcery points and vice versa.

Metamagic:

Careful Spell - Use a sorcery point to protect some creatures from your spell.

Empowered Spell - Use a sorcery point to reroll spell damage.

SORCERY POINTS - 6

FEATURES & TRAITS

Wild Magic Surge - DM can have you roll a d20 after casting a spell. If a 1, roll on the Wild Magic Surge table.

Tides of Chaos - Once per long rest, you can gain advantage on an attack, ability check or save.

Bend Luck - 2 sorcery points to adjust a creature's roll by +/- 1d4

INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

Sorcerer's Robes

Cloak

Languages known: Common, Elvish, Sylvan

C _____

S _____

E _____

G _____

P _____

INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

KRYDLE

CHARACTER NAME

6th-Level Rogue

LEVEL & CLASS

Half Elf

RACE

PLAYER NAME

Chaotic Good

ALIGNMENT

Noble

BACKGROUND

EXPERIENCE POINTS



STRENGTH
14
+2

DEXTERITY
17
+3

CONSTITUTION
15
+2

INTELLIGENCE
13
+1

WISDOM
11
+0

CHARISMA
16
+3

3 INSPIRATION

+3 PROFICIENCY BONUS

SAVING THROWS

- Strength
- +6** Dexterity
- Constitution
- +4** Intelligence
- Wisdom
- Charisma

SKILLS

- +6** Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- Arcana (Int)
- +5** Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- +4** History (Int)
- +3** Insight (Wis)
- +6** Intimidation (Cha)
- +4** Investigation (Int)
- Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- Performance (Cha)
- +9** Persuasion (Cha)
- Religion (Int)
- Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- +6** Stealth (Dex)
- Survival (Wis)

10 PASSIVE PERCEPTION

ARMOR CLASS: **14**
MAX HP: **55**
TEMP HP:
CURRENT HIT POINTS:
TEMP HP:
CURRENT HIT POINTS:

HIT DICE: **6** d6, d8, d10, d12
INITIATIVE: **+3**
SPEED: **30 FT.**
VISION:
DEATH SAVES:
SUCCESSIONS:
FAILURES:
VISION:

NAME	ATTACK	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO	USED
Longsword	+6	1d8 (1H) 1d10 (2H)			
Daggers	+6	1d4 + 3	20/60		

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

Expertise - Double your proficiency bonus on Persuasion and Stealth checks

Thieves' Cant - You know a secret thief language, along with thifty symbols and signs known only to thieves.

Cunning Action - Take a bonus action to use Dash, Disengage, or Hide

Fast Hands - Use your bonus action to, pick locks, disarm traps, or use an object and look awesome doing it.

Second Story Work - Climbing doesn't cost an extra movement. Running jump increases by your Dex mod.

Uncanny Dodge - Halve the damage taken from an attacker you can see.

Feature: Criminal Contacts - Krydle has many friends in low places.

Sneak Attack +3d6 damage on attacks where you have advantage

Knowledge of Baldur's Gate - It's home turf.

FEATURES & TRAITS

Leather armor (AC 11 + Dex modifier)
Burglar's pack - (1,000 ball bearings, a bell, 10' of string, 5 candles, crowbar, hammer, 10 pitons, hooded lantern, 2 flasks of oil, 5 days rations, tinder box, waterskin, 50' of hempen rope)
Thieves' tools (X2 prof bonus)(small file, lockpick set, pliers)
Small mirror mounted on a metal handle
Narrow-bladed scissors
Set of common clothes with hooded cloak
Pouch containing 15 gp
Languages known: Common, Elvish,
Thieves' Cant

INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

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MINSC

CHARACTER NAME

6th-Level Ranger

LEVEL & CLASS

Human

RACE

PLAYER NAME

Chaotic Good

ALIGNMENT

Soldier

BACKGROUND



STRENGTH
18
+4

DEXTERITY
12
+1

CONSTITUTION
17
+3

INTELLIGENCE
10
0

WISDOM
10
0

CHARISMA
10
0

3 INSPIRATION

+3 PROFICIENCY BONUS

SAVING THROWS

- **+7** Strength
- **+4** Dexterity
- ___ Constitution
- ___ Intelligence
- ___ Wisdom
- ___ Charisma

SKILLS

- ___ Acrobatics (Dex)
- **+3** Animal Handling (Wis)
- ___ Arcana (Int)
- **+7** Athletics (Str)
- ___ Deception (Cha)
- ___ History (Int)
- **+3** Insight (Wis)
- **+3** Intimidation (Cha)
- ___ Investigation (Int)
- ___ Medicine (Wis)
- **+3** Nature (Int)
- ___ Perception (Wis)
- ___ Performance (Cha)
- ___ Persuasion (Cha)
- ___ Religion (Int)
- ___ Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- **+4** Stealth (Dex)
- ___ Survival (Wis)

10 PASSIVE PERCEPTION

14 ARMOR CLASS

65 MAX HP

TEMP HP

CURRENT HIT POINTS

HIT DICE

6 d6
d8
d10
d12

INITIATIVE **+1**

30 FT. SPEED

VISION

SUCCESSES ○○○○

FAILURES ○○○○

DEATH SAVES

NAME	ATTACK	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO	USED
Longsword	+6	1d8 + 4 / 1d10 +4 (2H)			
Spell Save DC = 11 Spell Attack Modifier = 3					
1st Level: Animal Friendship, Hunter's Mark, Longstrider, Speak with Animals					
2nd Level: Animal Messenger, Beast Sense					
ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING					

Favored Enemy - Minsc's favored enemy is... Evil! And he gets bonuses for smashing it.

Greater Favored Enemy - Minsc gets more bonuses for smashing evil!

Natural Explorer: Minsc does not get hampered by hampering things. Also, he does rangery things better!

Fighting Style - Minsc does +2 with his evil-slicing longsword.

Primeval Awareness - Minsc can communicate with beasts.
"Go for the eyes, Boo!"

Extra Attack - More attacks mean more smiting!

Ranger's Companion - There can be only one giant miniature space hamster. Boo!

FEATURES & TRAITS

- Leather Armor
- Longsword
- Food for Boo
- Languages known: Common, Miniature
- Giant Space Hamster

INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

C

S

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P

NERYS

CHARACTER NAME

6th-Level Cleric
LEVEL & CLASS

Human
RACE

PLAYER NAME

EXPERIENCE POINTS

Lawful Good
ALIGNMENT

Acolyte
BACKGROUND



STRENGTH
16
+3

DEXTERITY
13
+1

CONSTITUTION
15
+2

INTELLIGENCE
12
+1

WISDOM
17
+3

CHARISMA
15
+2

3 INSPIRATION

+3 PROFICIENCY BONUS

SAVING THROWS

- Strength
- Dexterity
- Constitution
- Intelligence
- +5** Wisdom
- +6** Charisma

SKILLS

- Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- Arcana (Int)
- +5** Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- History (Int)
- +5** Insight (Wis)
- Intimidation (Cha)
- Investigation (Int)
- +5** Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- Performance (Cha)
- +6** Persuasion (Cha)
- +6** Religion (Int)
- Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- Stealth (Dex)
- Survival (Wis)

13 PASSIVE PERCEPTION

16 ARMOR CLASS

55 MAX HP

TEMP HP

CURRENT HIT POINTS

6 HIT DICE

d6 _____

d8 _____

d10 _____

d12 _____

+2 INITIATIVE

30 FT. SPEED

SUCCESSES

FAILURES

DEATH SAVES

VISION

NAME	ATTACK	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO	USED
Greatsword	+6	2d6 + 3			
Dagger	+6	1d4 + 6			

Spell Save DC = 14 **Spell Attack Modifier = 6**

Cantrips: Spare the Dying, Thaumaturgy, Light, Guidance

1st Level: Command, Cure Wounds, Detect Evil and Good, Detect Magic

2nd Level: Prayer of Healing, Zone of Truth, Locate Object

3rd Level: Speak with Dead, Glyph of Warding, Magic Circle

Domain Spells (Always prepared) - Divine Favor, Shield of Faith, Magic Weapon, Spiritual Weapon, Crusader's Mantle, Spirit Guardian

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

Divine Domain - War - proficiency with martial weapons and hvy. armor

Channel Divinity

Turn Undead

Guided Strike - +10 to attack

War God's Blessing - grant creature +10 attack

War Priest - attack as a bonus action

Destroy Undead - Destroy undead CR 1/2

FEATURES & TRAITS

Medium Armor - Breastplate

Cloak

Greatsword

Holy Symbol of Kelemvor

Prayer Book

5 sticks of incense

Languages known: Common, Dwarven

INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

C _____

S _____

E _____

G _____

P _____

SHANDIE

CHARACTER NAME

6th-Level Rogue

LEVEL & CLASS

Lightfoot Halfling

RACE

PLAYER NAME

Chaotic Good

ALIGNMENT

Urchin

BACKGROUND

EXPERIENCE POINTS

STRENGTH

10

0

DEXTERITY

18

+4

CONSTITUTION

15

+2

INTELLIGENCE

13

+1

WISDOM

12

+1

CHARISMA

14

+2

3

INSPIRATION

+3

PROFICIENCY BONUS

- Strength
- +6** Dexterity
- Constitution
- +4** Intelligence
- Wisdom
- Charisma

SAVING THROWS

- +7** Acrobatics (Dex)
- Animal Handling (Wis)
- Arcana (Int)
- Athletics (Str)
- Deception (Cha)
- History (Int)
- +3** Insight (Wis)
- Intimidation (Cha)
- +4** Investigation (Int)
- Medicine (Wis)
- Nature (Int)
- Perception (Wis)
- Performance (Cha)
- +8** Persuasion (Cha)
- Religion (Int)
- +7** Sleight of Hand (Dex)
- +10** Stealth (Dex)
- Survival (Wis)

SKILLS

11

PASSIVE PERCEPTION

15

ARMOR CLASS

55

MAX HP

TEMP HP

CURRENT HIT POINTS

6

- d6
- d8
- d10
- d12

HIT DICE

+4

INITIATIVE

25 FT.

SPEED

SUCCESSES

FAILURES

DEATH SAVES

VISION

NAME	ATTACK	DAMAGE	RANGE	AMMO	USED
Shortsword	+6	1d6 + 4			
Daggers	+6	1d4 + 4	20/60		
Short Bow	+6	1d6 + 4	80/320		

ATTACKS & SPELLCASTING

Expertise - Double your proficiency bonus on Persuasion and Stealth checks

Thieves' Cant - You know a secret thief language, along with thifty symbols and signs known only to thieves.

Cunning Action - Take a bonus action to use Dash, Disengage, or Hide

Fast Hands - Use your bonus action to, pick locks, disarm traps, or use an object and look awesome doing it.

FEATURES & TRAITS

Second Story Work - Climbing doesn't cost an extra movement. Running jump increases by your Dex mod.

Uncanny Dodge - Halve the damage taken from an attacker you can see.

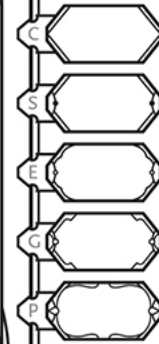
Feature: Criminal Contacts - Shandie has many friends in low places.

Sneak Attack +3d6 damage on attacks where you have advantage

Knowledge of Baldur's Gate - It's home turf.



Leather armor (AC 11 + Dex modifier)
 Burglar's pack - (1,000 ball bearings, a bell, 10' of string, 5 candles, crowbar, hammer, 10 pitons, hooded lantern, 2 flasks of oil, 5 days rations, tinder box, waterskin, 50' of hempen rope)
 Quiver with 20 arrows
 Thieves' tools (X2 prof bonus)(small file, lockpick set, pliers)
 Small knife
 Map of Baldur's Gate
 Disguise Kit
 Set of common clothes with hooded cloak
 Pouch containing 15 gp
 Languages known: Common, Halfling, Giant, Thieves' Cant



INVENTORY & EQUIPMENT

Next Issue: Dragon+ 16

Check out this preview of Issue 16



It's safe to say we're all a little bit excited about next issue's lineup. Interviews don't come much bigger than the star we've managed to secure for Issue 16 of *Dragon+*. Ahead of the November release of *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, we'll be sitting down eye to eye to eye to eye to eye (...you get the idea) with Baldur's Gate's most infamous crime lord, Xanathar himself!

Elsewhere, we'll focus on the storytellers, as we chat with a number of our favorite bards who help bring the fantasy worlds of D&D alive.



We also gave you a pretty big glimpse into the *Tomb of Annihilation*

this issue, but you haven't really seen inside Acererak's latest playset until artist Jason Thompson has cast his comic eye over it. He'll be creating the definitive map showing just how many ways Chult and its citizens can end your existence.

There's all this, plus another delve into the imposing *Dragon* archive, and all our regulars like Unearthed Arcana, maps of the month, a selection of the best D&D video and audio highlights and much more!

(Contents subject to change)

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: **Matt Chapman**

EDITOR: **Bart Carroll**

MANAGING EDITOR: **Tae Kim**

SUB-EDITORS: **Scott Fitzgerald Gray, Octavia Wolton**

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: **Chris Avellone, Robert Babcock, Bart Carroll, Matt Chapman, Jeremy Crawford, Will Doyle, Allen Evans, Dean Edmonds, Rich Lescouflair, Mike Mearls, Henry Melton, Shawn Merwin, Cindy Moore, Scott Fitzgerald Gray, Matt Sernett**

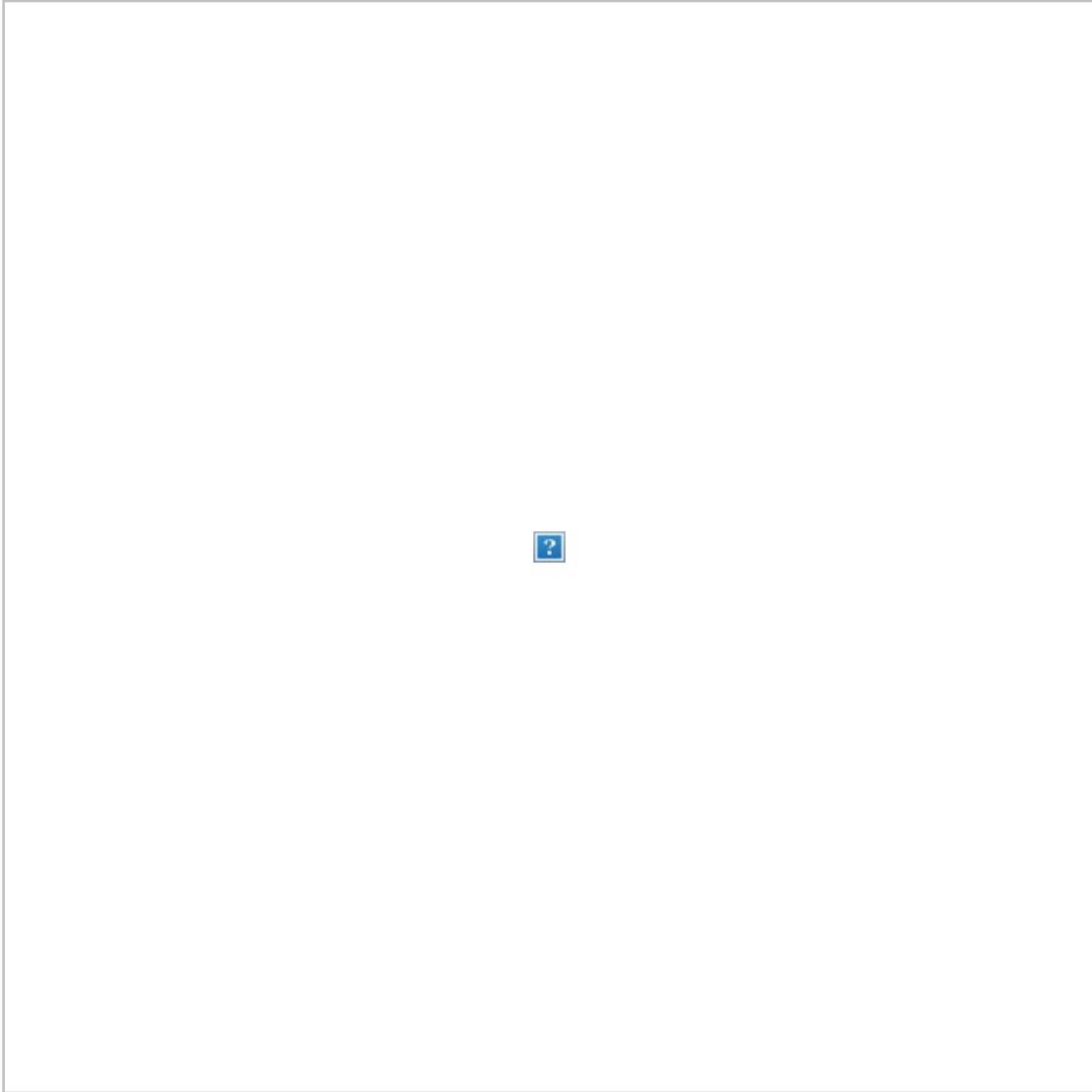
DESIGN and ART

HEAD OF DESIGN: **Christopher Imlay**

ART DIRECTOR: **Dylan Channon**

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS: **Larry Day, Daniel Horne, Stephan Peregrine, Leah Palmer Preiss, Jason Rainville, Mike Schley, Jason Thompson, David A. Trampier, Richard Whitters, Shawn Wood**

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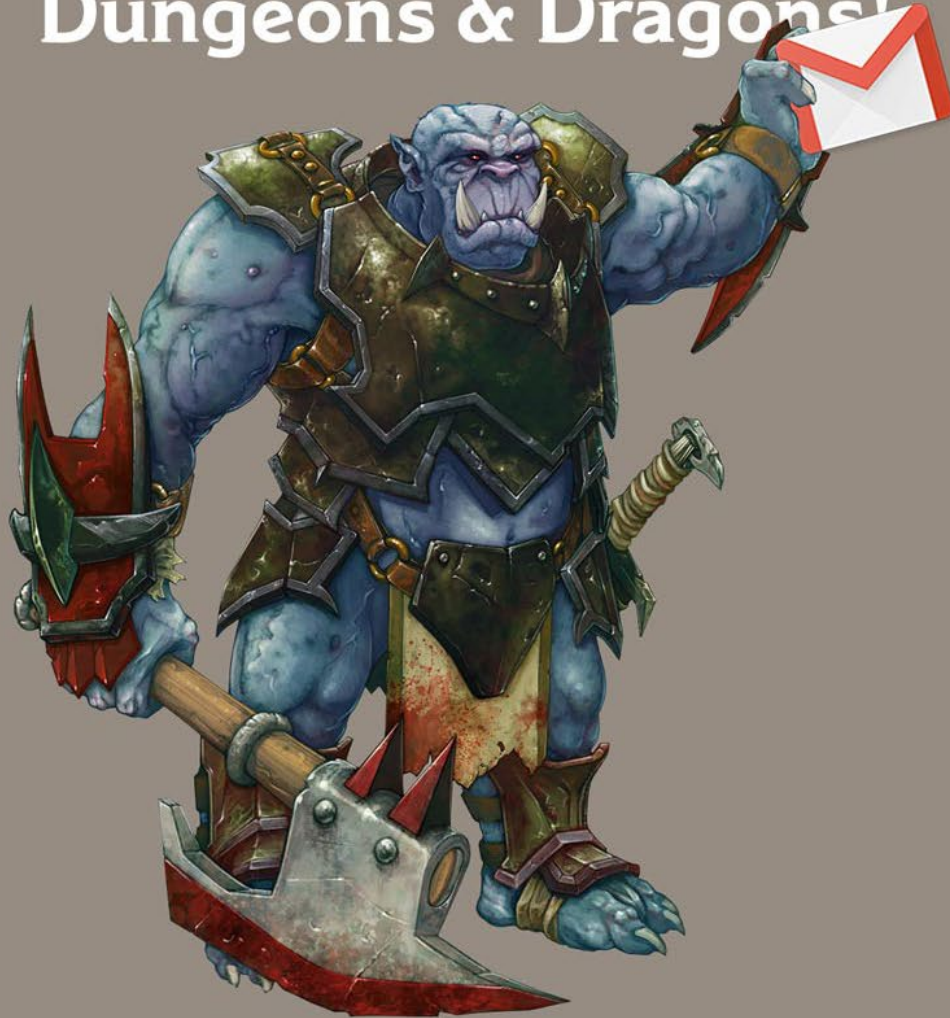
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